

Paul Morphy

A Modern Perspective



Valeri Beim

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Paul Morphy: A Modern Perspective

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. H. Kaltenbrunner who often helps me with my writing.

Signs, Symbols

!	a strong move
!!	a brilliant or unobvious move
?	a weak move, an error
??	a grave error
!?	a move worth consideration
?!	a dubious move
#	mate

Introduction

When I set about collecting material for my first book I wanted to ensure that the material would be as varied as possible. Looking for variety, I dove into examples from the 19th century, knowing that I would undoubtedly find them to be clear and convincing. The first source I “delved into” was Paul Morphy. All that I knew of him was that he had been a very young and colossally talented American chessplayer, that he traveled to Europe, where in a relatively short span of time he convincingly overcame the world’s best players; including the one who was unquestionably the strongest – that great master of attack, Adolf Anderssen.

Upon his return home Morphy refused to play on even terms against anyone. He underwent a psychological withdrawal that progressed to the point where he refused to play chess, except for odds games against a childhood friend, or an occasional simultaneous exhibition.

Morphy had an amazing eye for combinations and played a very aggressive style of chess, bravely sacrificing material for the attack. His contemporaries fell one after another, unprepared to withstand such an assault. Still, he played at a relatively low level compared to those who followed him, since the rules of positional play were as yet unknown, pending the arrival of Steinitz. Positional blunders appeared ubiquitously, in great quantities; and in this sense, Paul Morphy was no exception, outclassing the others only on the strength of his talent for combinations.

That is how I imagined the chess life of that era.

Understandably, I was only aware of a few examples of Morphy’s outstanding play, all of them the same – crushing defeats of trusting opposition.

Such was my knowledge of Morphy when I began my research. This was gleaned from a few books that often parroted one another, sometimes to the point of using the same exact words! In beginning my search for appropriate examples, I wasn’t expecting anything extraordinary. I thought only to come across something as yet undiscovered, a selection of lesser-known spectacular combinations and lightning attacks; I could not have hoped for more.

What I actually found was, as you may have guessed, something different.

I tried to uncover examples that were not too one-sided, and mainly chose to study those games versus more or less serious opposition – very few of my selections were odds games.

Thus I found myself reviewing Morphy’s most significant games and found, somewhat surprisingly, that they were hard fought battles with chances for both sides.

His opponents were not always lambs for the slaughter – not by a long shot!

For it is only in such struggles that we uncover the player's true character. The games especially chosen for books, articles, or other publications too often give a completely one-sided view of the real chessplayer.

Take one example: the brilliant game Rotlewi - Rubinstein (Lodz, 1907), which is commonly considered Rubinstein's "signature game." It is, in fact, a genuine treasure, but the percentage of such games played by Rubinstein (and I'm talking about the style of play, not the level!) was astonishingly small. What was really typical of his play in this example was only his masterful handling of a symmetrical pawn structure.

Many of the games I examined in this review of Morphy's work did fit my preconceived opinion of his play, but they were also considerably more interesting and deeply planned. I saw much that I had never read or heard described before, which forced me to seriously examine and deeply reflect on Morphy's play. A most interesting picture developed, which so overwhelmed and attracted me that I decided to save the majority of my examples from Morphy's games for a more suitable time; to keep my conclusions, for the time being, to myself and preserve them for wider circulation and more ambitious goals.

So it happened that the book, with which I intend to acquaint you with my discoveries, is now written and lies before you. Everything I wanted to say on this subject has been said – and, to the extent possible, shown – in this book. I consider it very important that, when I express some idea, I also present exact proof insofar as I am able. One must not merely present a hypothesis – one must also show that it *really* can stand on its own, and explain how it works out on the checkered board.

For such proof, I send the reader to the text of my book; but one conclusion I should like to present now and I hope you will agree with it after you finish the book. Alekhine, upon the death of Capablanca, expressed the highest praise for his great opponent, saying that such a genius had never existed before and apparently never would again. This characterization could also apply to Paul Morphy. I present this conclusion, not as a tribute to the memory of a notable chessplayer, but also as something far more practical. Those who are blessed from birth with a great talent, and who succeed in properly appraising and developing that talent, will outstrip their colleagues, even when they are very talented people themselves. In other words, between talent and genius there is a canyon which cannot be crossed, not even by the most grueling toil.

Alas, this is how it is for most. It's a fact that must simply be accepted, just as we accept the laws of nature. And since such a gift is given to someone for a reason, then it is up to us to try to extract whatever good that talent may do us, by devot-

ing serious study to the legacy of that genius.

To such study I dedicate this book; and I hope that I have succeeded in my presentation. I ask the reader to be my judge.

I am interested in your opinion about any of my books and stand ready to answer any questions you may have. You may contact me via e-mail: valeribeim@gmx.net.

Valeri Beim
Vienna
June 2005

Paul Morphy: Researching a Phenomenon

To follow the thoughts of the great is a most absorbing lesson. – A. S. Pushkin

I indicated in the Introduction the surprise and then delight that prompted me to begin the present work.

Yet, there have been many who have written about Morphy, who have studied his biography in detail and analyzed his games. And since I consider it a waste of time to put toner to paper only to restate what is already known, or merely to touch up a small number of variations in someone else's analysis – then how can I be of any use, or interest? Of course, there are those books which, by smartly summarizing the knowledge others have accumulated, and presenting the fullest and best organized picture of whatever subject they tackle, still manage to be interesting, useful, and even necessary.

Still, I have always tried to offer my readers a personal, original thought; without this, I would not dare to write books. So – what's this book about, and what are its goals?

Much has been written about Morphy, but the main theme throughout has always been the mystery of this legendary and tragic figure, and some secret or other behind the amazing rise and astonishing results of this American genius. Alexander Alekhine put it simply and clearly: "The power, the indomitable power of Morphy was both the reason for his success and the basis of his immortality." (*Shakhmatny Vestnik*, 1914) I concur in this opinion and I doubt anyone would disagree with it, but I am certain that my readers would be interested to know something more indicative of this power, of what created it and where it sprang from.

Naturally, the necessary conclusions can only be obtained from an objective analysis of the games, and these must be games which were played against (more or less) strong opposition. Just such analysis, and the conclusions which follow from it, form the subject matter of this book. The bulk of the games are taken from the matches Morphy played in Europe, but of course we will also examine other significant games characteristic of Morphy's style of play. I have tried to avoid odds games wherever possible.

The focus of this book is not historical research, but a few historical excursions will be unavoidable. We must know the situation in the chess world during Morphy's time, since its influence on the child, and later on the young man, was indubitably very significant.

I ask your pardon in advance for any possible inaccuracies. I am, unfortunately, a

very minor specialist in these matters, and my knowledge of this subject comes only from the popular literature in Russian, German and English. It is, however, my hope that this level of knowledge will prove ample for the goals of our research. So – let us begin with a historical overview of the world of chess when our hero arrived on the scene.

Chess had already acquired some amount of theory and the legacies of the Italians Polerio and Greco, and especially of the great French player F. A. D. Philidor, were still of practical importance in the making of a chessplayer. From the end of the 18th through the first half of the 19th century, the leading lights of the chess world were French and English players (the Germans would catch up soon enough); not surprisingly, then, the most important events in the first half of the 19th century became a series of matches among the leading chessplayers of these nations: the Frenchman de Labourdonnais, the Irishman McDonnell, and later between the Englishman H. Staunton and the Frenchman Saint-Amant.

These matches were significant landmarks in the history of chess and had considerable influence on the development of opening theory. Additionally, they considerably raised the interest in this game among the educated class. This was when the idea that chess was *a suitable pastime for persons of substance* began to take hold and spread. (In this joyless era for our beloved game, we can only look back on such an attitude with hopeless nostalgia.) Still, it would be a very long time before chess would merit serious consideration as a real profession.

The result of this change of status was an increase in the number of contests and increased public attention being paid to them. Contests between the strongest masters grew more frequent, first as matches, and then, in 1851, London saw the first real international tournament in the history of chess. This event would attract all the world's best players – with one small exception.

New books were being written and chess magazines appeared. The popularity of chess grew daily, attracting more and more people. Such wonderful moments in our cultural history are well known – a lengthy period of almost subterranean accumulation of knowledge and expertise in the preceding generations later explodes into a fiery cascade of interest in the subject – which then leads to the appearance of the top talent, or frequently even of a number of great masters. Such a figure is the subject of our book.

Part One: America

Paul Morphy was born in New Orleans in 1837 to a respectable, secure family in which his uncle, father, grandfather, and elder brother played chess. Thus, he was raised in a chess atmosphere, a circumstance that forms an important element in the development of many great masters. Morphy, as indicated on page 15 of David Lawson's excellent book *Paul Morphy: The Pride and Sorrow of Chess*, "had been watching his father playing even before he was six years old, for at eight and ten years of age he was engaging Gen. Winfield Scott and Dr. Camille Rizzo successfully..." This age, I have found from my extensive experience as a trainer, is quite sufficient for retaining that ability to absorb information.

In our day, the sequence by which young talents break into the chess world follows a familiar pattern. At an early age they demonstrate outstanding knowledge of the most diverse opening variations, which is only possible with an excellent memory; a rapid and accurate capacity for calculation; outstanding combinative capabilities; plus – and this component is *de rigueur* – resourcefulness in unpleasant situations. This last characteristic is rarely mentioned, but it is of exceptional importance. Its presence or absence must be considered when evaluating any young player's potential.

These characteristics reveal themselves very quickly, and at about the 13th year they turn into real and, in our era, quite significant results. We saw it with Capablanca, Reshevsky demonstrated his enormous talent at an amazingly

early age, and then came Fischer's rapid, unstoppable ascent. In recent years such developments have become commonplace.

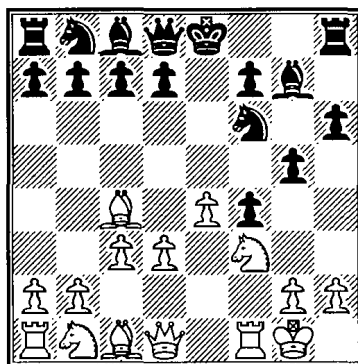
But the very first *wunderkind* in the history of chess was Paul Morphy! From his youth he demonstrated the whole gamut of qualities listed above. Let's see how notable his play was at an early age.

McConnell, J. - Morphy, P.
New Orleans, 1849

**1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♟f3 g5 4.♞c4
♞g7 5.d3**

This passive move is contrary to the spirit of gambit play. The theoretical continuations are 5.d4 d6 6.c3 or 5.h4.

5...h6 6.0-0 ♟f6 7.c3



7...b5!?

A notable moment; it was mainly because of this decision by Black that I included this game. Objectively, the move is inaccurate. The exclamation point is for Black's knowledge of the idea and for courage. The move was undoubtedly influenced by the Evans Gambit, which would have been well

known to young Morphy. However talented the youngster, his first steps are always taken in imitation of someone else. Simpler and better was 7...d5 8.exd5 0-0 9.♖b3 ♘bd7 or 7...d6 with advantage to Black in both cases.

8.♙×b5 c6 9.♙c4 d5 10.exd5 cxd5 11.♗e2+?

The immediate bishop check was better.

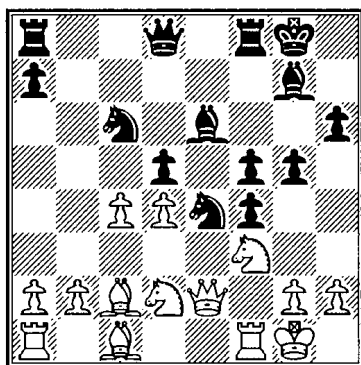
11...♙e6 12.♙b3?!

And this decision is even less fortunate, again the right response was 12...♙b5+.

12...0-0 13.d4?!

Improving Black's position; after 13.♘a3!? ♘c6 Black would have had only a small advantage.

13...♘e4 14.♙c2 f5 15.♘bd2 ♘c6 16.c4?



As a result of White's inaccurate play, his position was already a bit worse, but still quite playable. For example, 16.♙a4!? ♖c8 leaves Black with an advantage, but the real battle would just be beginning. Instead, White commits a grave error that decreases the quality

of this game precipitously.

16...♙×d4+!?

Now we come to the second crucial point of this game from the viewpoint of our research. The simplest, strongest way to win was the obvious 16...g4! 17.♘e1 ♘xd4, after which the win must come very quickly. Nevertheless, Black's decision is noteworthy and interesting. My point is that there was a third way to win the pawn by capturing at once with the knight. So, if we compare this possibility with the move played in the game, then the latter move deserves preference because it brings another piece into the game, and this makes it harder for White to defend himself by exchanges.

Another aspect to consider is that this game, judging from appearances, was probably played at a fast pace; given White's terrible blunders on the 12th and 16th moves and from the fact that Black overlooked the simplest solution. This is easily understood from the perspective of a 12-year-old boy. Morphy probably wasn't calculating very much, and he probably evaluated the difference between the two captures intuitively, while undoubtedly foreseeing the whole variation that occurred in the game. Remember this moment; we will draw conclusions from it a little later.

17.♘×d4?

White trustingly enters the main variation. He had to play 17.Kh1 when 17...♙b6 or 17...♙g7 would have left Black with "only" a large advantage.

17...♘×d4 18.♗d3 ♗b6 19.♗h1

♠xc2 20.♙xc2 ♠f2+ 21.♙g1?

This is bad, of course; but it only confirms our suspicion as to the speed of play in this game. Besides, taking the knight wouldn't really have changed anything.

21...♠h3+ 22.♙h1 ♙g1+
23.♙xg1 ♠f2# 0-1

After seeing this simple little game, so weakly played by Morphy's opponent, I nevertheless feel justified in expressing my first conclusion by relating the words of Mikhail Botvinnik. Please recall that the great master's words were always few, always laden, and deeply thought-out. He formulated the following: *The Most Important Elements of Chess Talent*. (I draw your attention to his use of the word *talent*, and not *strength*. We will have more to say about the elements of strength.) In his opinion, these were the following: *Rapidity* or quick calculation; *memory*; and *the method of using the first two components* (64-*Shahmatnoe Obozrenie* #8, 2001).

This last element is the least understood and the "cleverest"; but I suspect that it is precisely its nature that distinguishes the simply talented players from those who later grow into the really gifted. So there you have it, the above episode gave us the opportunity to think about the presence and importance of the first component in the young Morphy. Later events would show that his memory was also a powerful weapon, as we find supported by the recollections of his niece. Neishtadt relates in *Uncrowned Champions* that she told of how, "having graduated from the university, Paul amazed local

lawyers with his photographic knowledge of the law codes of the state of Louisiana ... this was a thick volume, encompassing ... more than a thousand articles with commentaries and notes. Morphy could recite from memory the text of any of these, word for word." This fact leaves a strong impression and goes a long way toward explaining the origin of our hero's chess talent.

As for the second episode, the one after White's 16th move, let's remember our suggestion of the intuitive nature of Morphy's decision and the path he chose in making it. Black successfully arranged his own pieces, while interfering with the capacity of his opponent's. Later on, we will see several such examples in the course of our examinations.

It is precisely to give a direction to this examination, and immediately to guide your attention to its most important aspects, that I allowed myself to begin making judgments while having in hand only the sketchiest material. Of course, I would never start acting so foolishly without good reason. It's just that I know how the picture is going to develop as we go along.

McConnell, J. - Morphy, P.
New Orleans, 1850

Some sources show the game as being played in 1852.

1.e4 e5 2.♠f3 ♠c6 3.♠c4 ♠c5
4.b4 ♠xb4 5.c3 ♠a5 6.0-0 ♠f6
7.d4 0-0 8.dxe5

Theory doesn't particularly approve of this move, preferring 8.♠xe5 or 8.♙c2.

8...♖×e4 9.♙a3?!

Typical Evans Gambit play, but an unfortunate choice in this position. After 9.♙d5 ♖c5 10.♖g5 ♖×e5 11.f4 White would have had compensation for his pawn.

9...d6 10.e×d6?

This is just a mistake, although even after the better 10.♖c2 ♖g5 11.♖×g5 ♖×g5 12.e×d6 c×d6 13.♙×d6 ♖d8 Black would have had a clear advantage. Now Black's advantage is decisive. The move played completely strips White's position of its last active possibilities in the center and aids the development and consolidation of Black's position. We will repeatedly see this kind of terrible positional error from Morphy's opponents.

Many authors, commenting upon the ease of Morphy's victories, say something along the lines of "such were the times – they were wild and undeveloped." But what was Morphy himself like in those days? How is it that, among such players, he still managed to sail to the very heights of chess? Where did he gain such an understanding of chess play? The answers will be found in our further study of these games.

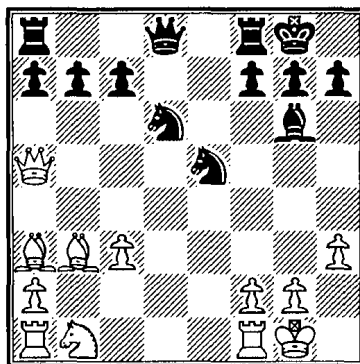
10...♖×d6 11.♙b3 ♙g4 12.h3 ♙h5 13.♖d5 ♙g6 14.♖e5?!

Another inaccuracy; 14.Re1 was relatively best, although it would not have affected the outcome.

14...♖×e5 15.♖×a5

After 15.♖×e5 ♙b6 Black's advantage

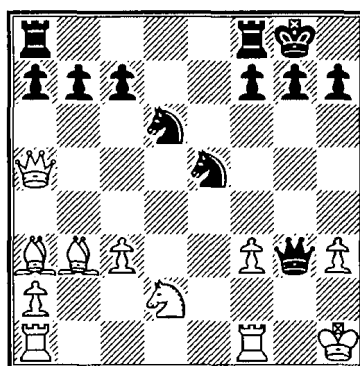
is also very great. But now he begins a direct attack on the enemy king and all the defender's forces find themselves far from the decisive events, which is typical in many of Morphy's games.



15...♖g5! 16.♖h1 ♙e4 17.f3

17.♖g1 ♖h5 is also hopeless. Now Morphy plays an obvious piece sacrifice to expose the white king's position and open the path for his other pieces.

17...♙×f3! 18.g×f3 ♖g3 19.♖d2



There is no saving line for White. For example: 19.♙×d6 ♖×h3+ 20.♖g1 ♖g3+ 21.♖h1 c×d6 22.♖d5 ♖ae8 23.♖d2 (23.♖×d6 ♖h3+ 24.♖g1 ♖×f3+ –+) 23...♖e6 and wins.

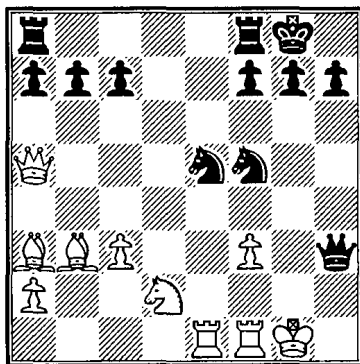
19...♖f5!

Black does not yet have enough pieces on hand to deliver the final blow to White's king. In such cases, time is always worth more than material.

20. ♖ae1

The rook is untouchable: 20. ♖xf8 ♜xh3+ 21. ♖g1 ♜g3+ 22. ♖h1 ♜e3 with mate soon to follow.

20... ♜xh3+ 21. ♖g1



21... ♜fe8

We have arrived at the moment for which, in great part, I included this game. A simpler, more forcing conclusion would have been the standard “windmill” movement of the queen: 21... ♜g3+ 22. ♖h1 ♜h4+! 23. ♖g1 ♜g5+ 24. ♖f2 ♜d3+ 25. ♖e2 ♜g3+ 26. ♖xd3 ♜xa5. Morphy's choice was less precise; but then, it was quite indicative of his play. Contrary to all the assertions about the astounding accuracy of his play, Morphy passes up a comparatively simpler win. Not because he was incapable of finding it, but because he saw an equally convincing win and liked it better; something we will see frequently in this book. The most important detail is that Morphy, in all such cases, chose *the path which put the greatest possible number of his*

pieces into play. This in turn means that he examined that line first, which is also very important!

22. ♖f2

Other tries would not have saved White: 22. ♖e2 ♜g3 23. ♖xe5 (23. ♖h2 ♜xf3+ 24. ♖xf3 ♖e1+) 23... ♜e2+! 24. ♖xe2 ♖xe2 25. ♖xf7+ ♜h8!; or 22. ♖a4 ♜h4 23. ♖xf7+ ♜h8! 24. ♖e2 ♜exf3+; while after 22. ♜xc7 Morphy would have had to go back and find the “staircase” for his queen: 22... ♜g3+ 23. ♖h1 ♜h4+ 24. ♖g2 ♜g5+. As you may easily see from the variety of these lines, Black's decision on the preceding move was not the most precise, objectively speaking; on the other hand, it did meet *certain important* principles, partly described above, the rest of which we will have to formulate for ourselves later on. But again we may ask, “How did he become acquainted with these principles?”

The game ended simply: 22... ♜g3+ 23. ♖f1 ♜d3 24. ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25. ♖xf7+ ♜h8! 0-1

In our next two games, Morphy faced much tougher opposition and the first serious opponent of his life. The 13-year-old boy passed his test with flying colors. In the interests of our research, I am presenting these games out of chronological order.

Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

New Orleans (2), 05/25/1850

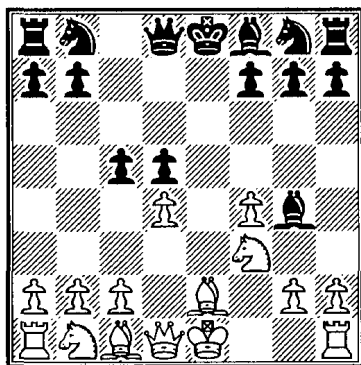
1.e4 c5 2.f4 e6 3. ♖f3 d5 4.exd5

An interesting moment; today 4. ♖b5+ is frequently played here, but 4.e5 is seen more often. Even in Morphy's time this was a well known line, having oc-

curred several times in the games of the McDonnell – de Labourdonnais match; one of the two most important events in the history of chess in those days. And the fact that the overall result of this variation was clearly favorable to Black, which is the side that the great de Labourdonnais always played, might also have been significant.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that Morphy was familiar with those games. And considering his phenomenal memory, he undoubtedly knew the theory of this variation. Nevertheless, he played his own line and this is already a serious indicator. It may be assumed that the contemporary “theoretical” positions of this line, with their fixed pawn chains, did not suit Morphy. Whatever the reason, the fact that a 13-year-old, who had very little practice against serious opposition, was not afraid to play his own way is a very good sign.

4...e×d5 5.d4 ♖g4 6.♙e2



Of course, White cannot expect to gain any sort of opening advantage; but here he ought to have played 6. ♖b5+!? which probably equalizes.

6...♙×f3?!

But Löwenthal immediately reprieves his young opponent. After 6...♙c6!? the advantage would have been Black's.

7.♙×f3 ♙f6 8.0-0 ♙e7 9.♙e3 c×d4?!

Still another inaccuracy; this one allowing White to seize the initiative: 9...c4 10.b3 c×b3 11.a×b3 ♙c6 was better.

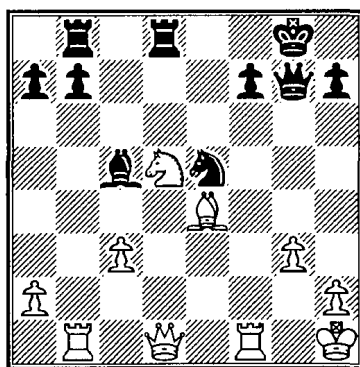
10.♙×d4 0-0

White keeps the advantage after 10...♙c6 11.♙c3 ♙×d4 12.♙×d4.

11.♙c3 ♙c6 12.♙×f6 ♙×f6 13.♙×d5 ♙×b2 14.♙b1 ♙d4+ 15.♙h1 ♙b8 16.c3 ♙c5 17.f5 ♙h4?!

Black had to think about safety and play 17...♙e7!? when after the likely continuation 18.♙×e7+ ♙×e7 19.♙×c6 b×c6 20.f6 g×f6 the position would have been unclear. Yet how could a player with an international reputation retreat before a child from a chess backwater?!

18.g3 ♙g5 19.f6 ♙e5 20.f×g7 ♙fd8 21.♙e4 ♙×g7



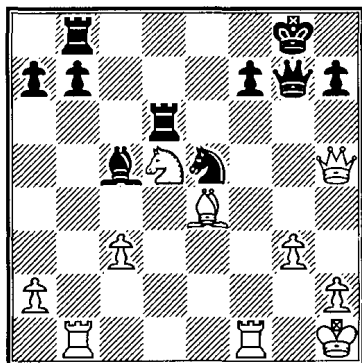
22.♙h5

Young Morphy has played simple,

strong chess and completely outplayed his opponent. But here, he commits a string of inaccuracies. He could have immediately delivered the blow he was preparing by this queen sortie, and to greater effect: 22. ♕xh7+!? ♖f8 (other replies are still worse) 23. ♕e4 ♗d6 24. ♖d2 and White reaches roughly the same position he does in the game, but with a pawn more. Why did Morphy, with his tremendous tactical alertness, miss this possibility? It is unlikely that he considered all the candidate moves; instead, he sought the move that followed the principle of *bringing into play the greatest number of pieces in the shortest possible time*.

More importantly White had an even stronger continuation in this position; first 22. ♖f5! and only after the forced 22... ♖h8 to continue 23. ♖h5. Now after 23... ♗g6 (Black is also in dire straits after 23... ♕d6 24. ♖bf1) 24. ♖bf1 ♖f8 25. ♕f6 White wins immediately. So Morphy only erred in the order of his moves; his *approach* to the resolution of the problem of this position was correct! What this approach was based upon is the most important question of this book and it will be analyzed further on.

22... ♗d6



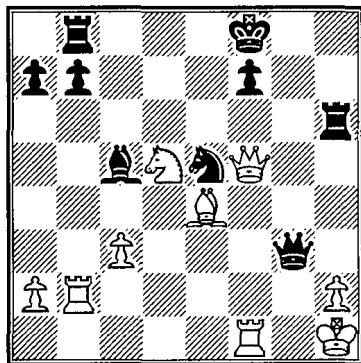
23. ♕xh7+?!

Again, objectively speaking, this was inaccurate. Once more, this was not by accident and not for lack of consideration! A stronger line was 23. ♕e7+!? ♖h8 24. ♕f5 ♖g6 25. ♖xg6 ♗xg6 26. ♖xb7 with an obvious advantage, even though everything is not yet completely clear. But the variation giving White a great, perhaps decisive, advantage was 23. ♖f5! ♕d7 24. ♖f4.

23... ♖f8 24. ♕e4 ♗h6 25. ♖f5 ♖xg3

Whereas now, as we can see, Black has not only kept material even, but has even managed to create a mate threat. Does this mean that Morphy miscalculated on his 23rd move? I don't think so, proposing instead that he foresaw the position after his next move.

26. ♖b2



If I am correct, then it is quite understandable why this position would have attracted him: *now all White's pieces are in play and they all work together!* It's a motif that will be repeated throughout the book. It is possible that White's last move may have attracted Morphy by its quite subtle, indeed, al-

most invisible beauty. This beauty lies in the fact that what appears to be a defensive move, turns out to be the overture to an attack, in which the previously passive rook plays a significant role. Unfortunately, it rests upon an oversight. Such hidden beauty can afford immense pleasure, but only if someone is well aware of the thread of the game. An uninformed or ill-informed spectator cannot understand the effect of this fragment. And that is, unfortunately, one of the reasons for the tragedy of our beloved game today.

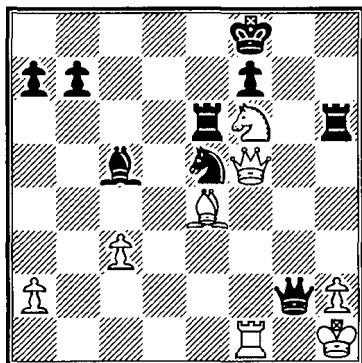
26...♖e8?

Having obtained a chance for salvation, Black passes it up. The only correct move was 26...♖h3! – a move Morphy undoubtedly either overlooked or underestimated in his calculations. After the forced exchange of queens (27.♖f4 ♖h4), White would be left without the spearhead of his attack and after 27.♖g2 ♗xf5 28.♖xf5 ♖e6 the game would be almost equal.

27.♖f6 ♖e6 28.♖g2?!

This move does not let the win slip, but 28.♖xe6 was simpler. Perhaps he was tired or quite understandably excited.

28...♖xg2+



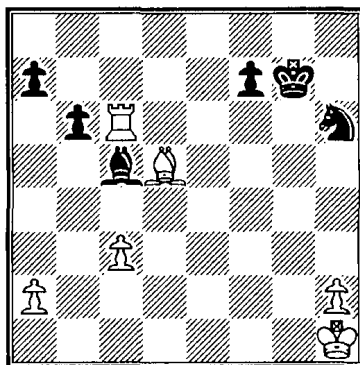
29.♖xg2?

29.♖xg2 would seem to be more natural, but the text turns out to be stronger and – what's most interesting – it's based on precise calculation! We are witnessing a very interesting structure of thought, if it can be so expressed.

29...♖e×f6 30.♖×f6 ♖×f6 31.♖×f6 ♖g4 32.♖f5!

This is the move that supports White's decision on move 29.

32...b6 33.♖d5 ♖h6 34.♖f6 ♖g7 35.♖c6



In the endgame, Morphy plays outstandingly and executes the entire ending flawlessly. Another fact we must put in our notebooks! The rest requires no further explanations.

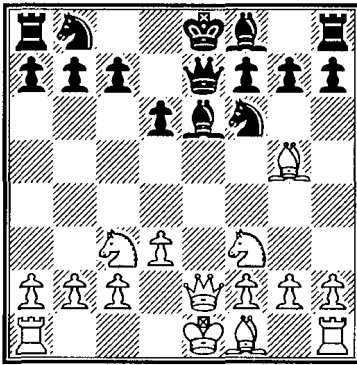
35...a5 36.♖c7 ♖g6 37.♖g2 f6 38.♖f3 ♖f5 39.♖e4 ♖g5 40.♖×f5 ♖×f5 41.h4 ♖g6 42.♖c6 ♖h5 43.♖g3 f5 44.♖f6 f4+ 45.♖×f4 ♖f2 46.♖e4 ♖c5 47.♖f5+ ♖×h4 48.♖×c5 b×c5 49.♖d5 1-0

I would like you to examine the following game fragment to draw your atten-

tion to just one move, albeit one that was never played!

Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.
New Orleans (1), 05/22/1850

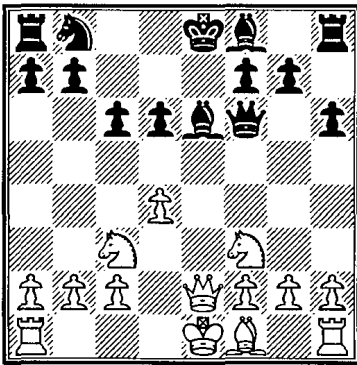
1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟f6 3.♟×e5 d6
4.♟f3 ♟×e4 5.♞e2 ♞e7 6.d3 ♟f6
7.♟c3 ♟e6 8.♟g5



8...h6?

This is a quiet line of the Petroff Defence. The position appears simple and clear, but requires accuracy from Black because he is behind in development. His last move, however, was inaccurate. Correct was 8...♟bd7 9.0-0-0 and only now 9...h6.

9.♟×f6 ♞×f6 10.d4 c6



This position comes about by force after Black's eighth move mistake.

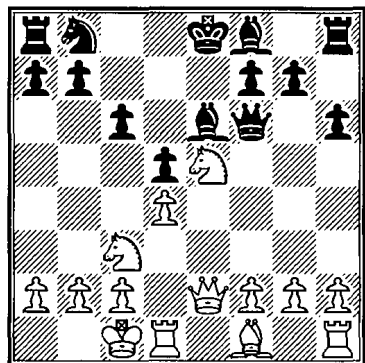
The young Morphy chooses an inferior continuation:

11.0-0-0?

It is precisely this decision by White that interests me enough to serve the goal of our research. Because nowadays it would be purely elementary for any gifted youngster, even one much younger than Morphy at the time he played this game, to find the move 11.d5! cracking Black's pawn structure, to be followed by 11...c×d5 12.0-0-0. I could easily picture myself criticizing any smart 8-year-old, with a couple years of regular study under his belt, if he could not find this continuation.

Why do I talk about all this, and why do I spend so much time on such details? Because this episode fits quite well into the framework of the questions we have posed ourselves, namely: Where, and how, did Morphy learn chess, and what did he know, and how did he know how to do it? There were some things he knew and understood intuitively; but in this episode, encountering a simple problem involving an element of *static* chess, the young Morphy took a pass. This episode, too, we will remember.

11...d5 12.♟e5



12...♖b4?

This time it was Löwenthal who erred. After the correct 12...♗d7 13.♗×d7 ♗×d7 it would be Black with a small, but long-lasting advantage. But after the following tactical blow:

13.♗×d5! ♗×d5 14.♗g6+

Morphy was able to demonstrate that the complications were in White's favor. He played excellently – but then the game finish falls into doubt. All sources agree up until Black's 54th move and then they diverge. According to Lawson (*Pride and Sorrow*, pp. 28-35), Löwenthal himself is responsible for the confusion, presenting an erroneous score in his collection of Morphy's games, with the game ending in a draw after a grievous blunder by Morphy at move 58. The correct score was provided by Paul's uncle Ernest and shows Black resigning on move 55. Anyway, all of the most interesting stages of the game are beyond doubt. Even if the tired boy let slip an elementary win at the very end, I don't see the problem. He did everything he had to do!

Let's go forward seven years. During this time, our hero studied in the Jesuit College in Spring Hill, Alabama, and then in the *Law School of Louisiana*, from which he graduated in April, 1857. We know only of Morphy's offhand games from this period and in nearly all of them, with some small exceptions, he gave odds of knight or rook; sometimes even more. Of course, only the opponents receiving the odds benefited from such games. The one giving the odds generally reduces the level of his play for two reasons. By practicing

against considerably weaker opposition one may, even unintentionally, become used to lower playing standards; and playing "crooked" chess, in which the strategic principles of play assume a minor role and tactics become paramount, is bound to make you stupid.

In our day, it's quite impossible to imagine how a young player could have developed his talent so completely with only this kind of practice. Especially during the most important maturing age, exactly when a teenager absolutely needs lots of practice, above all against opponents superior in experience and strength. Paul Morphy did so and he soon brilliantly won an important tournament, demonstrating a tremendous superiority over the opposition. Then he made his phenomenal tour of Europe, entering forever into chess history. This accomplishment was truly a fantastic one. One can only bow before such a unique gift and regret all the more that it ended prematurely!

For Morphy to reach such an enormous level of playing strength unaided was an absolutely unique occurrence in the practice of world chess. According to Kasparov on page 32 of *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, Morphy utilized the chess literature of the day and "read Philidor's *L'analyse*, the Parisian magazine *La Régence*, Staunton's *Chess Player's Chronicle*" and possibly also Anderssen's *Schachzeitung* (at least, he knew all of Anderssen's published games). He studied Bilguer's 400-page *Handbuch* – which consisted partly of opening analyses in tabular form, and also Staunton's *Chess Player's Handbook*."

The young Morphy not only had his

phenomenal memory, but also he loved to learn and was an expert student. He was fluent in English, French, German, and somewhat in Spanish, which he mastered at school. He even finished his five-year Law School program in only two years! Thus, with his amazing gift for obtaining and retaining information, Morphy was able to compensate for the absence of structured chess training normally necessary for the development of young talent.

Moreover, in some respects this “bookish” method of development was fruitful as it kept the young Morphy from being influenced to any great extent by the American chess environment, which was quite provincial in comparison with Europe. Simultaneously, it directed his development on a much more professional course in comparison with other American players.

Let’s examine the games Morphy played in the period after gaining his law degree and before he went off to Europe. In October of 1857, he went to New York to participate in his first serious event – The First American Chess Congress. This event was organized under the influence of the London Tournament of 1851 and followed the same format.

Naturally, the players who participated in this tournament played an enormous number of offhand games against each other. These were Morphy’s first encounters with the majority of the leading American masters and some of the games are worthy of careful scrutiny. One of these games became widely popular thanks to its spectacular nature. It was also quite characteristic of

Morphy’s playing style.

But first, I would like to acquaint you with a little-known, simple-looking game from that period that is useful for the goals of our research.

Morphy, P. - Schulten, J.

New York, offhand game, 1857

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 ♙c5 4.c3 ♟ge7

The replies 4...♟f6 4...♞f6 and even 4...f5 are far more popular today.

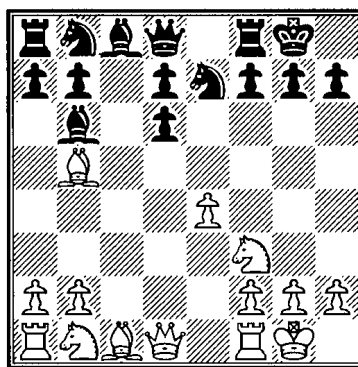
5.0-0 0-0?!

A significant inaccuracy; 5...♙b6 was better.

6.d4 exd4

After 6...♙d6 7.♟bd2 White’s advantage is clear.

7.cxd4 ♙b6 8.d5 ♟b8 9.d6 cxd6



As we will see, Morphy has become much more adept in the problems of pawn structure.

10.♙f4!

This continuation is objectively better than 10.♞xd6 ♙c7 11.♞d3 d5 12.♙g5

a6 13. ♖a4 ♜bc6. It is also completely in accordance with the principles of piece development, in which Morphy was a pioneer.

10... ♖c7?

Weak. In fact, 10...d5 was strictly necessary; after 10.exd5 d6 12.h3 White has the advantage, but the battle would just be beginning.

11. ♜c3

Now Black is "strangled."

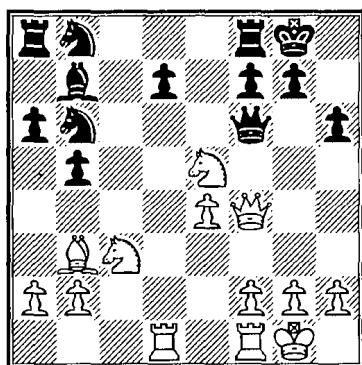
11...a6 12. ♖c4 b5 13. ♖b3 ♜b7 14. ♖xd6 ♖xd6?!

14... ♜bc6 was more stubborn.

15. ♜xd6 h6 16. ♜ad1 ♜c8 17. ♜f4 ♜b6?

The decisive mistake in a very unpleasant position; he had to keep the d6-square under control. After 17... ♜c6 18.e5 White's advantage is great, but Black would still have hope.

18. ♜e5 ♜f6



19. ♜xf6!

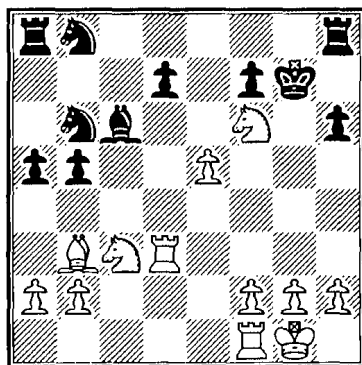
It would have been enough for White to retreat the queen to g3 and then set up a kingside attack by advancing his

f- and e-pawns. This method would probably have been chosen by, say, Anderssen. But Morphy's choice is simpler and characteristic of his chess worldview. He nearly always preferred clarity and would not shrink from favorable simplification. Capablanca was like that, as was Robert Fischer. I would like to draw particular attention to the similarities between Morphy, Capablanca and Fischer, which will be discussed further.

19...gxf6 20. ♜g4 ♜g7 21. ♜xf6! ♖c6

21... ♜xf6 22. ♜d6+ ♜e7 23. ♜xb6 ♖c6 24. ♜d1 ♜d8 25. ♜d5 was also hopeless for Black.

22.e5 a5 23. ♜d3 ♜h8



24. ♜cd5!

Another outstanding, simple and technically precise decision; Morphy plays this quite straightforward ending strongly and convincingly. Don't forget that this young man as yet had almost no serious playing experience.

24... ♜c4

24... ♜xd5 would have been strongly met with 25. ♖xd5! and the black pawns

become weaker still. Again, I draw your attention to the young player's rapidly developing feel for *some* problems of pawn structure.

**25. ♖×c4 b×c4 26. ♜g3+ ♔f8
27. ♜b6 ♜a7 28. ♜d1 ♖b5 29. ♜d4
♜c7 30. ♜dg4 1-0**

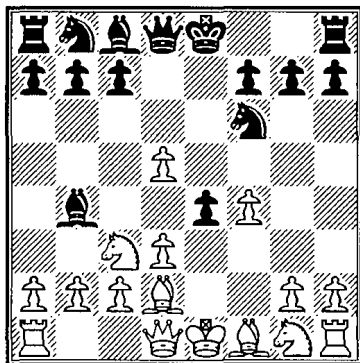
Here is the famous game cited previously, which is so characteristic of Morphy's play. Kasparov commented upon it, in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on pages 35-36, and I will make use of some variations from his observations.

Schulten, J. - Morphy, P.
New York, offhand game, 1857

1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5 3.exd5 e4 4. ♖c3

Nowadays, 4.d3 is considered more accurate.

4... ♜f6 5.d3 ♖b4 6. ♖d2

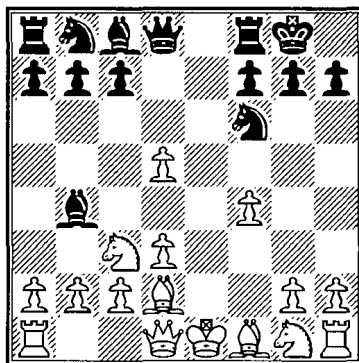


Here comes the move that sent this rather simple little game into the annals of history:

6...e3!? 7. ♖×e3 0-0 8. ♖d2

The point of Black's sacrifice becomes clear and I refer the reader to my after-

ward of this game where I present examples from two of the games between de Labourdonnais and McDonnell. They allow us to see the close parallels with Morphy's decision and read Morphy's own evaluation of a similar situation. They also serve as a good illustration of my thinking on the role studying chess literature played in Morphy's chess development.



8... ♖×c3!

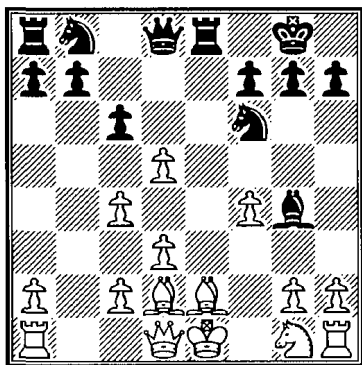
The knight on c3 might have become an important defensive piece for White as may be seen from this variation given by Kasparov: 8... ♜e8+ 9. ♖e2 ♖g4? (taking the knight is still good here) 10. ♜e4! with the better position for White.

9.b×c3 ♜e8+ 10. ♖e2 ♖g4 11.c4

This move has been repeatedly criticized, but it's playable. Kasparov gives 11. ♔f2 ♖×e2 12. ♜×e2 ♜×d5 13. ♜f1 as the strongest continuation, correctly noting that the continuation 13. ♜e1 ♜c6 14. ♔g1 ♜c5+ (inducing the weakening 15.d4) leaves Black better; but I cannot see what the improvement for White is after 13... ♜c5+!? 14. ♜d4 ♜c6 15. ♔g1 ♜×d4 16. c×d4 ♜×d4+ 17. ♔h1 ♜ad8. I therefore suggest that it would

be better to play 11.h3, the continuation being 11...♖xd5 12.♔f2 ♕xe2 13.♜xe2 ♖c5+ 14.♔g3 when chances are level.

11...c6



12.dxc6?

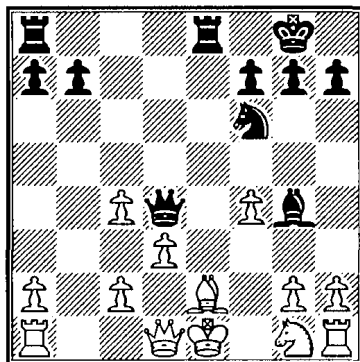
This decisive error illustrates the gap between Morphy and his American contemporaries. It violates the most important principle of chess: namely development. Both this principle and the *principle of co-ordination of forces* that flows from it have many ramifications. Morphy naturally possessed an ideal sense of these issues and it was precisely his understanding and his wonderful implementation of these principles that are the chief legacy left to us by this great American chessplayer.

This is the premise I aim to prove in this book and this game serves as a good example. Instead of helping his opponent's previously undeveloped pieces into play and opening lines of activity for them, White should have concerned himself with his own development. Kasparov says, "absolutely essential was 12.h3 ♕xe2 13.♜xe2 cxd5 14.cxd5 ♖xd5 15.0-0 ♜c6 with an extra pawn, for which Black has

some compensation, but not more."

12...♜c6 13.♔f1

Now Black's overwhelming forces break through easily. 13.♕c3 ♜d4 14.♕xd4 ♖xd4 does not help as it leads to a position that provides an excellent illustration of the *principle of co-ordination of forces*:

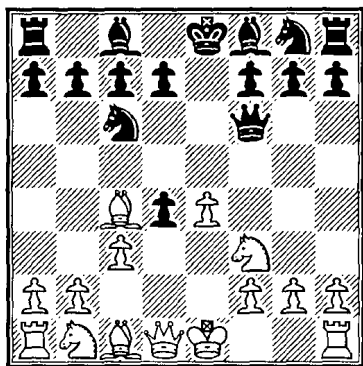


Black has more pieces in play with open paths into the enemy camp, but most importantly, all his pieces work together. Not surprisingly, there's no salvation for White: 15.♔f1 (White doesn't have it any easier after 15.h3 ♜h5! 16.hxg4 ♜g3) 15...♕xe2+ 16.♜xe2 ♖xe2! 17.♔xe2 ♖e8+ 18.♔f1 ♜g4.

13...♖xe2 14.♜xe2 ♜d4 15.♖b1 ♕xe2+ 16.♔f2 ♜g4+ 17.♔g1 ♜f3+ 18.gxf3 ♖d4+ 19.♔g2 ♖f2+ 20.♔h3 ♖xf3+ 21.♔h4 ♜h6 0-1

Here are the examples I promised you earlier:

The next diagram shows the position, from the game de Labourdonnais - McDonnell, London Match-1 (2), 1834, Black played 5...d3. Comment-



ing on this game in the *New York Ledger* on Saturday, August 13, 1859 Morphy wrote:

“McDonnell here selects the best move. It effectually prevents the formation of centre pawns by his adversary, and in a measure restrains the action of the White pieces on the queen’s side. If 5...dxc3; 6.♟xc3 ♖b4 7.♙d2 ♜ge7 8.♞b5, and White’s superiority is more marked than in the game as actually played. Again, if 5...♙c5 6.e5 ♜g6 (Black evidently could not have played 6...♟xe5 as White would have won a piece by 7.♜e2 followed by 8.cxd5.) 7.cxd5 with a fine game. Had Black in this latter variation played 6...♜e7, White would have replied not with 7.cxd5, as in that case Black could have captured pawn with bishop [7...♙xd5], but with 7.0-0, having a very strong attacking game.”

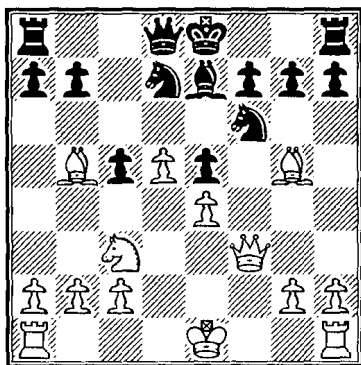
This reveals some important elements in Morphy’s chess worldview. Note that he speaks of the restriction of activity. This passage encapsulates one of the important principles of *chess dynamics*, which is one of the main themes of this book.

Here are two illustrations of this theme:

Morphy, P. - Meek, A.

New York, offhand game, 1857

1.e4 e6 2.d4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.f4 d6
5.♟f3 ♙g4 6.fxe5 ♙xf3 7.♜xf3
dxe5 8.♙b5+ ♟d7 9.♟c3 ♟gf6
10.♙g5 ♙e7

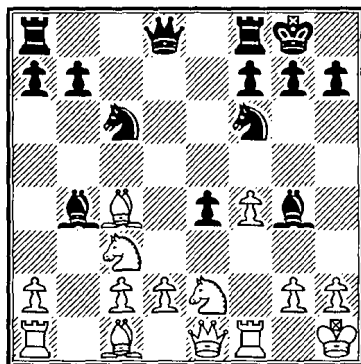


11.d6! ♙xd6 12.0-0-0 1-0

McDonnell, A. - de Labourdonnais, L.

London-1 (24), 1834

1.e4 e5 2.♙c4 ♙c5 3.b4 ♙xb4
4.f4 d5! 5.exd5 e4 6.♟e2 ♟f6 7.0-0
0-0 8.♟bc3 c6! 9.dxc6 ♟xc6
10.♜h1 ♙g4 11.♜e1



Now came the spectacular 11...e3! After 12.dxe3 ♙xe2 13.♙xe2 ♟e4 14.♙b2 ♜a5 White’s position was hopeless and Black soon won. The similarity between this game and Schulten - Morphy is enormous.

The Congress soon began and it used the same system of knockout matches that was utilized at the London tournament. All the matches were played to the first 3 wins, except the final which was played to 5 wins. Morphy got a favorable draw in the first round in that he faced a player with a solid, healthy playing style and a good player by the standards of American chess. His opponent was an older, very experienced player and it is possible that Morphy would have had to exert his full powers were Mr. Thompson in his best years. As it was, facing just this opponent, he acquired the experience of real battle that he so acutely needed. Young talents can instantly absorb the lessons learned, for when they face strong opposition, they literally grow from one game to the next.

Let's see what lessons the experienced warrior taught the young genius.

Morphy, P. - Thompson, J.
First American Congress,
New York (1.2), 1857

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 e6 5.♕e3 ♕e7 6.♗c3 h6?!
7.♕d3 d5?

This creates significant weaknesses – to go with the pointless loss of a tempo on the previous move.

8.♕b5!

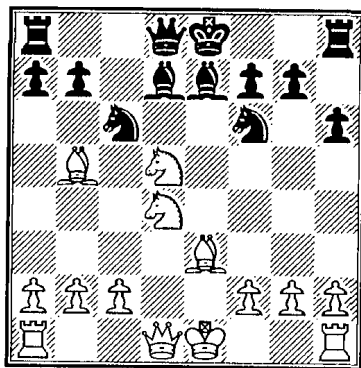
Morphy has no fear of “trampling upon principle” when necessary. He moves a piece a second time even though he has many pieces yet to develop. From the viewpoint of our research this means that Morphy was more than just

a “primitive genius” who merely understood the principle of rapid development. Of course, this alone could not be enough to win! We will see that Morphy had vast capabilities and an intuitive sense of the deep secrets of positional play, which Steinitz would later present to the world. Here, White's move is intended to create weaknesses for the opponent. So Morphy, “whose pieces never retreat,” briefly forgets about development.

8...♕d7

Bravely played; if Black tries to hold on to the material by 8...♖d7 9.exd5 exd5 10.♖f3 ♗f6 11.0-0 White seizes the initiative, while Black's weaknesses remain.

9.exd5 exd5 10.♗xd5 ♗f6



11.♗xf6+?!

A hard move to understand and a serious positional oversight; after the simple 11.♗xe7 ♖xe7 12.0-0 White stays a pawn up with excellent chances to convert it.

11...♕xf6 12.c3

Yet another inaccuracy; White retains an indisputable advantage after

12.♙xc6 bxc6 13.0-0.

12...0-0?!

But now it's Morphy's opponent who plays inaccurately. After 12...♙xd4!? 13.♙xd7+ ♖xd7 14.♙xd4 ♙xd4 15.♖xd4 ♖xd4 16.cxd4 0-0-0 White would have faced considerable technical difficulties.

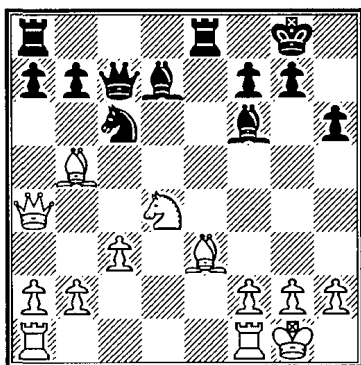
13.0-0 ♖c7

Now after 13...♙xd4 14.♙xd7 ♖xd7 15.♙xd4 ♙xd4 16.♖xd4 ♖xd4 17.cxd4 ♖fd8 18.♖fd1 ♖ac8 19.♖d2 White's chances would be better than in the preceding variation.

14.♖a4

White should probably have played 14.♙xc6 bxc6 15.♙c4 with an advantage.

14...♖fe8



15.♖ad1?!

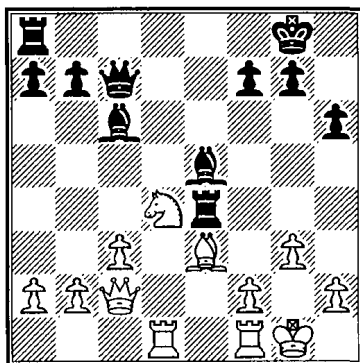
Morphy plays "natural developing moves" and gradually finds himself outplayed! The secret of this journey is that just playing according to general principles isn't always enough. Now was the time for more concrete measures: 15.♙xc6!? bxc6 16.♙c4 ♙f5

(16...♖ab8 17.♖c2) 17.♖ad1 ♖e4 18.♙d4 ♙xd4 19.♖xd4 retaining winning chances.

15...♖e4!

It would seem that it's Black's pieces which coordinate better! Nobody ever played against Morphy like that before!

16.♙xc6 ♙xc6 17.♖c2 ♙e5 18.g3?!



Morphy was unwilling to take the draw after 18.♙xc6 ♙xh2+ 19.♖h1 ♖h4 20.♖d4 ♙f4+ 21.♖g1 ♙h2+. But in that case 18.h3 was more accurate.

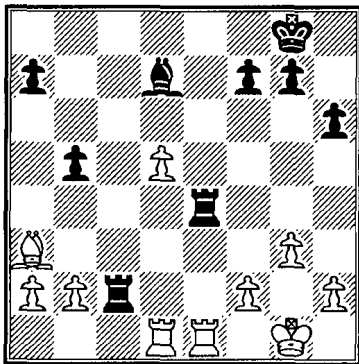
18...♙xd4! 19.cxd4 ♖e7?!

Morphy's opponent begins to commit errors now that the game has entered a phase where accurately calculating variations is required. After 19...♖a5! the game would have been even.

20.d5 ♙d7 21.♙c5?

Again, White errs! Morphy was unrecognizable in this game. After 21.♖c7 ♙h3 22.♖xe7 ♖xe7 23.♖fe1 White would have had the upper hand.

21...♖c8! 22.♙xe7 ♖xc2 23.♙a3 b5 24.♖fe1



24...f5?

This terrible blunder decides the game; Black boxes in his bishop when it should be roaming free. After the simple 24...Bxe1+! 25.Bxe1 a5 26.Qd6 Bxb2 27.a3 Qh3! 28.Qc7 b4 29.axb4 axb4 30.Bd1 b3 White would have had to fight to save himself and he might not have done so with best play by Black!

25.f3 Bxe1+?

25...Bee2 26.Bxe2 Bxe2 was much stronger, allowing Black some hope of salvation.

26.Bxe1 Bd2

26...a5 27.Qd6 Bxb2 28.Be7 loses rapidly; but 26...f4!? might have left him with saving chances. Now White just wins.

27.d6 a5 28.Qc5 b4

White has a great advantage after 28...Bxb2 29.Be7; or 28...Bd5 29.b4 axb4 30.Qxb4 Bd4 31.a3.

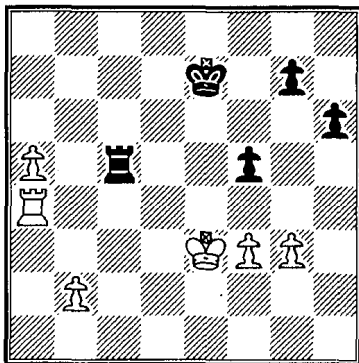
29.Be7 Bd5

30...Qc6 31.Qc3 g5 32.Qe5 does not save him either.

30.Qxb4 axb4

Or 30...Qc6 31.Qc3 g5 32.Qe5.

31.Bxd7 Qf8 32.Bb7 Bd4 33.Qf2 Bxd6 34.Bxb4 Bd2+ 35.Qe3 Bxh2 36.a4 Bc2 37.a5 Bc5 38.Ba4 Qe7



39.b4

39.a6 Bc8 40.a7 Ba8 41.Qf4 was a simple win, but we must suppose that Morphy had calculated this to the end.

39...Bc8 40.b5 Bb8 41.a6 Qd7 42.b6 Qc6 43.b7 Qb6 44.a7 Be8+ 45.Qf4 Qxb7 46.a8 Q+ Bxa8 47.Bxa8 Qxa8 48.Qxf5 1-0

This game provided a useful lesson for a young, inexperienced talent.

The third and final game of this match was also interesting.

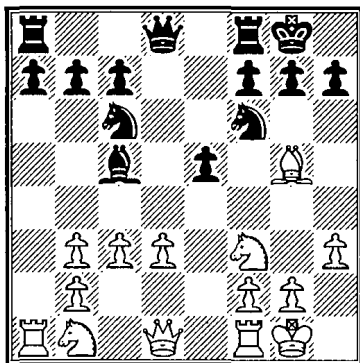
Thompson, J. - Morphy, P.
First American Congress,
New York (1.3), 1857

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qc4 Qc5 4.c3 Qf6 5.d3 d6 6.h3 Qe6 7.Qb3 d5 8.exd5

Not the best choice. 8.Qg5 Qd7 would have given equal play. And either

8.♖e2 or 8.♗bd2 would have been better than the text.

8...♗×d5 9.0-0 0-0 10.♗g5 ♗×b3 11.a×b3



After 11.♖×b3 ♖b8!? 12.♖d1 ♖d6 Black would have a slight initiative. But now he has the opportunity to open the game forcefully in the center and Morphy, of course, takes advantage of it. The consequent weakening of his position doesn't frighten him; the initiative is more important!

11...h6 12.♗h4 g5 13.♗g3 e4 14.♗e5!

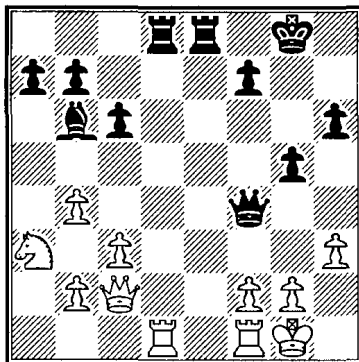
White reacts correctly and retains all his chances for counterplay.

14...♗×e5 15.♗×e5 e×d3 16.♗×f6?

Now, however, he commits a fundamental error, trading off his only active piece and helping his opponent develop. After 16.♖f3! ♗d5 17.♗d2 (17.♖d1? ♖e8 18.♗g3 ♗e3! 19.f×e3 ♖×e3 20.♖f2 ♖e5 21.♗×e5 ♗×f2+ 22.♖×f2 ♖d5 23.♗g3 ♖e8 with a great advantage for Black) 17...♖e8 there are chances for both sides.

16...♖×f6 17.♖×d3 ♖ad8 18.♖c2

♖fe8 19.b4 ♗b6 20.♗a3 ♖f4! 21.♖ad1 c6



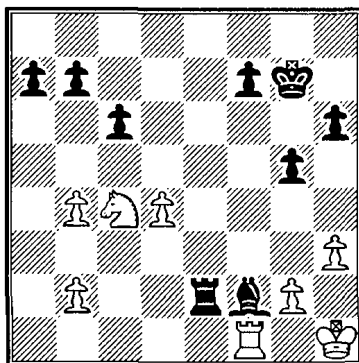
22.♖d3?

This is an oversight. However, even the better 22.b3 ♗c7 23.g3 ♖f3 24.♗c4 (24.♖fe1? ♗b6!-+) 24...♖e2 25.♖×d8+ ♗×d8 would leave Black with a clear advantage.

22...♗×f2+ 23.♖h1 ♖×d3 24.♖×d3 ♖e3 25.♖d8+

Retaining queens does not give White any counterplay: 25.♖d7 ♗g3 26.♖d1 ♖e4 27.♖d8+ ♖g7 28.♖d7 ♗f4 and Black wins.

25...♖g7 26.♖d4+ ♖×d4 27.c×d4 ♖e2 28.♗c4



28...♖e1!?

A typical Morphy decision in technical positions; he had a very high regard for the advantage of bishop over knight in the endgame and his technique in such endgames was outstanding. Furthermore, he was happy to simplify in technically won positions, a trait that can also be found in Fischer's play.

A solid way of exploiting his advantage would have been the preliminary strengthening of his position by 28...f5 29.♖d6 f4.

29.♖×e1 ♙×e1 30.♜a5 ♙×b4 31.♜×b7 ♜f6 32.♜d8 c5 33.♜c6 ♜e6 34.d×c5 ♙×c5 35.g4 ♜d5 36.♜d8 f6 37.♜g2 a5 38.♜f3

Black also wins easily after 38.b3 ♙b4 for example: 39.♜f7 ♜d4 40.♜×h6 ♜c3 41.♜g8 ♜×b3 42.h4 a4 43.h5 a3 44.h6 ♙f8 45.h7 ♙g7.

38...a4 39.♜e2 ♙d4 40.♜d3 ♙×b2 41.♜f7 ♙e5 42.♜c2 ♜c4 43.♜d8 a3 44.♜b7 a2 45.♜a5+ ♜b4 46.♜b3 ♜a3 0-1

This match ended with a 3-0 score, but it was hard fought. And the inexperienced youngster, genius though he might have been, benefited from the match. Later, after returning to New York from Europe, Morphy again played J. Thompson. Only this time Morphy gave him *knight odds*! And still won the match +5 -3 =1! What Morphy had gained in the interim was experience against strong opposition. But, of course, to make *such effective use* of that experience is a property of the exceptionally gifted.

Morphy's next opponent at the Congress was Judge Meek, a longtime play-

ing partner. Morphy won without too much trouble, although the judge strove mightily. But his next opponent, T. Lichtenhein, was a different caliber of player, with a European playing style, although Lichtenhein never reached the same level as the leading masters of Europe. Morphy won the first game easily and quickly with Black. He also won the second game, but only after his opponent repeatedly miscalculated variations in a completely unclear position. Until that moment Lichtenhein had played incomparably better than Morphy's usual opponents. The third game took a course that Morphy was unfamiliar with. Nevertheless, he played quite well:

Lichtenhein, T. - Morphy, P.

First American Congress,
New York (3.3), 1857

1.d4

This is the first game that we know of in which Morphy had to play a closed opening system.

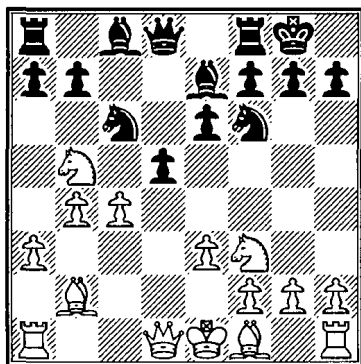
1...d5 2.c4 e6 3.♜c3 ♜f6 4.♜f3 c5 5.e3 ♜c6 6.a3 ♙d6

It's more customary to play 6...a6 nowadays; 6...c×d4 7.exd4 ♙e7 also appears sometimes.

7.d×c5 ♙×c5 8.b4 ♙d6 9.♙b2 0-0 10.♜b5?!

Moving a developed piece twice to pursue centralization; but the loss of time will tell and Black will obtain good play. White had a small advantage after 10.c×d5 exd5 11.♜b5 ♙b8 12.♙e2 in Botvinnik - Tal, World Championship Match, Moscow 1960 (12).

10...♙e7



Another small episode, but one of interest to us; it shows that Morphy did not always play “against the king.” If he had then he would have played 10...♙b8. We may assert unequivocally that he *always strove to seize the initiative* – a vital element of chess dynamics. Yet the only time that initiative was directed against the enemy king was either when the king’s position had been weakened or when Morphy found himself with a preponderance of force in that direction. So everything strictly depended on the position. Wherever weaknesses appeared in the enemy camp, or he achieved a local superiority in forces, Morphy would not hesitate to act in that direction.

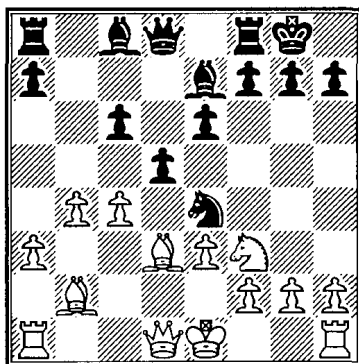
Acting in accordance with the position, rather than his personal preference, was one of the elements that defined Morphy’s superiority over his contemporaries. It was Alexander Alekhine who asserted that Morphy’s strength lay in “...deeply thought-out *positional* play, chiefly of an aggressive nature.” (*Shakmatny Vestnik*; 1914)

11.♘bd4 ♘e4!

This second move of an already devel-

oped piece is very much to the point and the strongest continuation in this position. Although *formally* this move involves a loss of tempo, *practically* it strengthens Black’s position as it aids in the activation of his dark-squared bishop and prevents the white queen from favorably relocating to d4. The power of that square could be seen in the variation 11...a5 12.b5 ♘x d4 13.♙x d4 with an advantage. This is another example of Morphy’s amazing *sense of the co-ordination of forces*. Note that we speak of *forces*, not just pieces. This concept includes coordinating the interaction of ones own forces and disrupting the same interaction of the opponent, insofar as possible. Vassily Smyslov is quoted in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on page 44, as saying, “his harmonious positional understanding and deep intuition would have made Morphy a highly dangerous opponent even for any player of our times.”

12.♘x c6 bxc6 13.♙d3



13...c5! 14.♘d2?!

14.b5?! ♙a5+ is bad because of Black’s 11th move. 14.cxd5!? ♙xd5 15.♙c2 ♙b7 appears best, although White would still have to fight for equality.

But now things could have gotten worse for him.

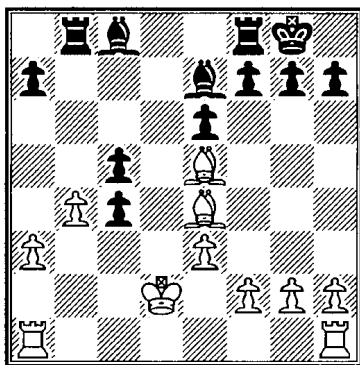
14...♟×d2

But not 14...c×b4? 15.♟×e4 b×a3 16.♟×a3 d×e4 17.♟×e4.

15.♟×d2 d×c4?!

A strange decision by Morphy who usually preferred simple and clear solutions: 15...c×b4 16.a×b4 d×c4 17.♟×c4 ♟×d2+ 18.♟×d2 ♟×b4+ would have been such a solution, although converting the extra pawn would still not be simple.

16.♟e4 ♟×d2+ 17.♟×d2 ♟b8 18.♟e5



18...♟b5!?

This looks better than 18...♟b7 19.♟×b8 ♟×e4 20.♟×a7 c×b4 21.f3 ♟d3 22.a×b4 ♟×b4+ 23.♟c1 when there doesn't seem to be any way for Black to improve his position.

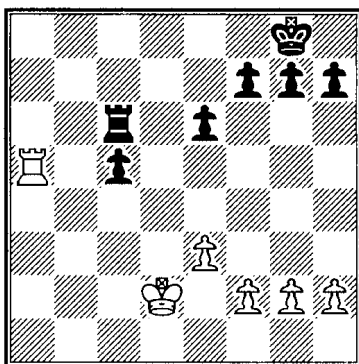
19.♟c6 ♟b6 20.b5 ♟b7 21.♟c7 c3+!

This zwischenzug is the point of Black's play.

22.♟×c3

22.♟c1 ♟×c6 23.b×c6 ♟×c6 24.f3 ♟a4 would have left Black with the advantage and good chances to convert it.

22...♟×c6 23.♟×b6 ♟f6+ 24.♟d2 a×b6 25.b×c6 ♟×a1 26.♟×a1 ♟c8 27.a4 ♟×c6 28.a5 b×a5 29.♟×a5



The rook endgame has arisen practically by force from Morphy's decision on move 15. Of course, he hadn't calculated all of this, but it's a good illustration of his intuition. Black retains some winning chances, but Morphy's next move reduces them.

29...g6

29...h6!? 30.♟c3 ♟h7 31.♟c4 ♟d6 32.♟a2 ♟d5 33.f3 and now 33...g5 looks more accurate. Black would retain the possibility of improving his position by gradually advancing his kingside pawns.

30.f3

This is an interesting and unexpected decision; White delays bringing his king forward in favor of first improving his pawn structure. After the direct 30.♟c3 ♟g7 31.♟c4 ♟d6 32.♟a2 ♟d5 Black still has hope.

30...♟b6?!

Declining to fight; conversely after 30...♖g7 31.♖c3 h5 32.h4! (this is why I would advise getting in ...g6-g5) Black has no way to improve the position as long as White just stands and waits.

31.♖xc5 ½-½

A game without much spectacle and therefore not well known, but as a step in the development of Morphy's talent it seems worth considering. It's a pity that he couldn't carry it through to victory by, say, a more precise 15th or 29th move. It's interesting to contemplate whether it would have become widely known or whether it would have been ignored as a poor fit into the style of "the straightforward native-born genius."

The fourth and final game of the match was also interesting. Morphy again played Black because the tournament rules stipulated that draws didn't count, so the game had to be replayed!

Lichtenhein, T. - Morphy, P.
First American Congress,
New York (3.4), 1857

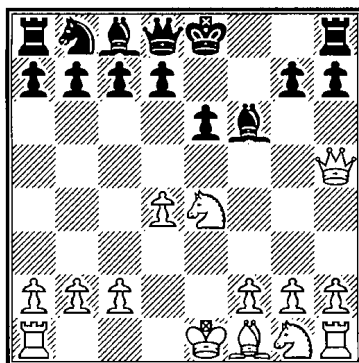
1.d4 f5 2.♖c3 ♖f6 3.♗g5 e6

3...d5 is more common today.

4.e4 fxe4 5.♖xe4 ♗e7 6.♗xf6
♗xf6 7.♖h5+

An unexpected choice; the usual continuation here is 7.♖f3 with somewhat better chances for White. In our day, a move such as the text and the idea associated with it would never be considered. It turns out, however, to be quite playable. Sometimes it's useful

to reexamine old games. It has a positive influence on the freedom of our thinking!



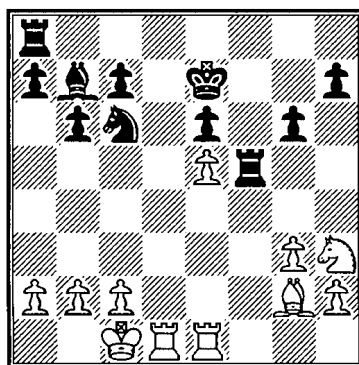
7...g6 8.♖xf6+ ♖xf6 9.♖e5
♖xe5+ 10.dxe5 b6 11.0-0-0 ♗b7
12.♖h3! ♖f8 13.♖g1 ♖c6 14.f4
♖e7

I prefer a plan with castling long followed by a break with ...h7-h6 and ...g6-g5.

15.g3 d6 16.♗g2?!

Another poor choice; from this moment Black takes over the initiative. 16.exd6+ cxd6 17.♗g2 was undoubtedly better with slightly superior chances for White.

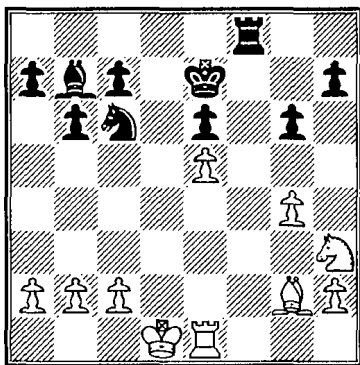
16...dxe5 17.fxe5 ♖f5 18.♖ge1



18...♖d8!

Excellent. Today, when nearly all the principles of play have been formulated, the basis of this move would be: "Since the rook at e1 is tied to the defense of the e5-pawn, it's a good idea to exchange off the other rook, which is not tied down, increasing the overall passivity of White's position." But who taught all of this to the young Paul Morphy?

19.g4 ♖×d1+ 20.♣×d1 ♜f8



21.♙×c6!

White is also alert to the requirements of the position! He does not mind trading off his wholly untrammelled bishop for the enemy knight to keep the e5-pawn in place.

21...♙×c6 22.♣d2 h6

22...♙g2 23.♙g5 h6 24.♙h7 ♜f2+ 25.♜e2 ♜×e2+ 26.♣×e2 leaves White with an indisputable advantage.

23.♜e3 g5 24.b3

Another excellent decision from Lichtenhein; he adroitly repositions his pawn chain to neutralize the enemy bishop. He also showed his understanding of the problems of pawn structure in the preceding game.

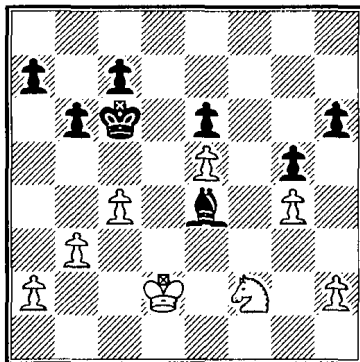
24...♜f1

A vitally important moment; Black's rook is more active than White's and an exchange of rooks would appear to be good for White. However, variations like 24...♙f3 25.♙f2 h5 26.g×h5! ♙×h5 27.♙e4 lead to complete equality. In an attempt to improve Black's position one might try: 24...♙b5!? 25.c4 ♙e8 26.♣e1 ♙g6 but I'm not sure that Black would have realistic winning chances. Morphy heads for his favorite "bishop vs. knight" endgame.

25.♜e1 ♜×e1 26.♣×e1 ♙e4 27.♣d2 ♣d7 28.c4!?

Certain of the solidity of his position, White sets a trap for his young opponent, expecting to win the game if Black falls into it. But it would have been better to win a tempo first by 28.♙f2 ♙g6 and then continue 29.c4. Of course, that would have led to another draw.

28...♣c6 29.♙f2



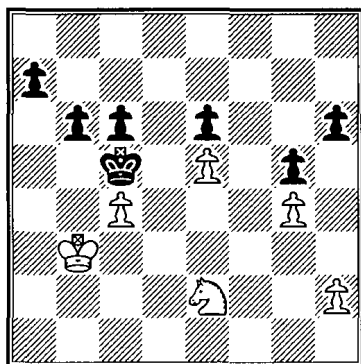
29...♙b1

Morphy walks right into the trap – and turns out to be correct! A hundred years later, such occurrences would be commonplace in the games of Mikhail Tal.

30. ♖d1?

Continuing the same dubious and losing line; after 30.a3 he could have still held the draw without difficulty.

30... ♙×a2! 31. ♖c2 ♙c5 32. ♖c3
 ♙×b3+ 33. ♖×b3 c6 34. ♖e2 0-1



The gamescore ends with the note: "And Mr. Morphy wins in the Third Section" (*The First American Chess Congress New York 1857*, p. 228).

A likely continuation is: 34...b5 35.c×b5 (35. ♖c3 b×c4 36. ♖d4 ♙d5 also leaves White struggling to draw.) 35...c×b5 and it's much easier to play for Black as White has great difficulties.

For our conclusions, it's important to note that Morphy showed a fine understanding of the problems of pawn structure and their relationship to the pieces, plus a rather deep general understanding of endgames. We see opening up before us the boundaries of his gift that have been little noticed in chess literature. And this was only the beginning of the journey!

Both of the games just examined show that Morphy's opponent was a stubborn

and competent player, especially in simple positions. But after his return from Europe, Morphy also played a match against him at *knight* odds and won by +6 -4 =1! This seems absolutely unbelievable and beyond the limits of understanding! I just cannot imagine there being anyone else who could have done such a thing.

So, having convincingly won all his matches, Morphy reached the final where an opponent of a completely different caliber awaited him: Louis Paulsen, who was later to become a famous and very strong player. Suffice it to say that Paulsen had plus scores against Anderssen, Chigorin, Gunsberg, and an even score against Zukertort. Paulsen was still young – only four years older than Morphy, and also fairly inexperienced. His best results were still ahead of him; but on the way to the final, he, like Morphy, demonstrated an evident superiority over his foes and the outcome of their match would have been hard to predict. In their previous encounters Morphy led by 2½-½, but in all three games both played *sans voir*, and in at least one Paulsen was taking on several other opponents.

Morphy, P. - Paulsen, L.

First American Congress,
 New York (4.1), 1857

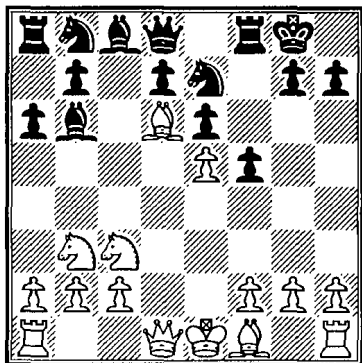
1.e4 c5 2.d4 c×d4 3. ♖f3 e6
 4. ♖×d4 ♙c5

Afterwards, Paulsen would never play this move again, sticking to 4... ♖f6 instead.

5. ♖b3 ♙b6 6. ♖c3 ♖e7 7. ♙f4
 0-0?

White has gained the upper hand from the opening, but after the obligatory 7...d5 the game would have barely begun. Whereas now:

8.♙d6! f5 9.e5 a6



10.♙e2

An important moment, having securely hampered his opponent in an almost strategically winning position, Morphy begins to play unconvincingly. Perhaps he was ill-acquainted with this type of position and underestimated the counter-chances of his opponent. We are well aware of the hardness that Sicilian positions possess and the many ways of combating it. Nowadays any player would almost automatically continue 10.♙d2 ♖bc6 11.f4 with queenside castling to follow. Black's chances of salvation in that case would have been small.

10...♖bc6 11.0-0?!

Continuing his bad plan, again 11.f4 would have been much better.

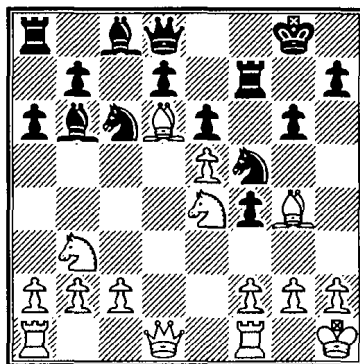
11...♞f7 12.♞h1 f4!

Very well played, White cannot be allowed to get his pawn to f4. Now Black has a clear target for counterplay: the e5-pawn.

13.♞e4 ♞f5 14.♙h5

White induces his opponent to create weaknesses.

14...g6 15.♙g4



15...♞g7?

Paulsen stumbles at the decisive moment! After 15...♞xg7! 16.♞xg7 ♞f8 Black obtains good counter-chances and the position becomes completely unclear.

16.♞f3 h5?

This amounts to a decisive blunder. It violates basic principles to advance the pawns on the side of the board where your opponent has an advantage in force. Black had to attack the e5-pawn and the bishop defending it with 16...♙c7 17.♞c3 ♞e8.

17.♙h3 ♞h4

17...g5 is met with 18.g4.

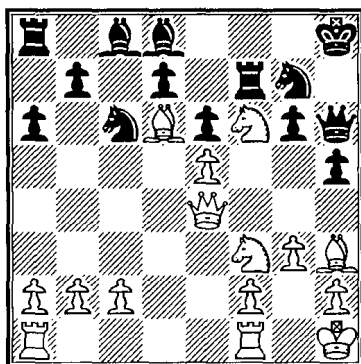
18.♞f6+ ♞h8 19.♞e4 ♞g5 20.g3 f3

Or 20...fxg3 21.fxg3 ♞f5 22.♙xf5 gxf5 23.♞e2 h4 24.♞f4! hxg3 25.hxg3 and White still has a decisive advantage.

21. ♖d2! ♕d8

Taking the knight is taboo: 21... ♖×d2 22. ♖×g6; however, he could have held out longer with 21... ♖d4 22. ♖ad1 ♖gf5.

22. ♖×f3 ♖h6



23. ♖g1!?

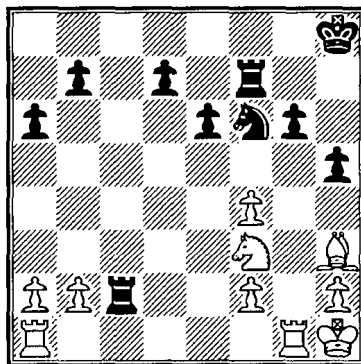
Morphy's "patented" means for bringing rooks without open lines into play. This is a technique that was also employed by Fischer, who was an ardent fan of Morphy and learned much that was useful from his great predecessor (see below). These days, this strategic technique has become standard in many variations of the "Hedgehog" System.

Additionally, the text move involves an interesting positional pawn sacrifice.

23... ♕×f6 24. e×f6 ♖e8?!

Taking the pawn looks tougher: 24... ♖×f6 25. ♕f4 d5 26. ♖e2 ♖h7 but White has 27. ♖e5! and "domination." In those days, of course, such a term was not in use, but Morphy understood all the advantages of the position.

25. ♕f4 ♖×f6 26. ♖×c6! ♖×f4 27. ♖×c8+ ♖×c8 28. g×f4 ♖×c2



29. ♖ac1!

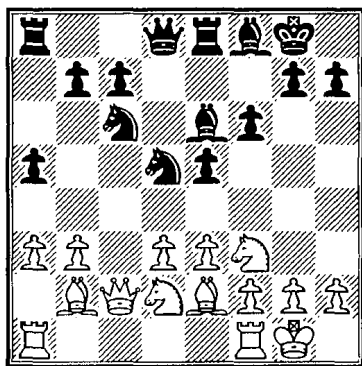
Here's another significant moment. Morphy displays convincing technique in the exploitation of a material advantage in the best style of much later chess epochs. He either exchanges or drives his opponent's only active piece off the open file. Concurrently, we can see that his 18th move from the preceding game was not an accident, but was based on a complete understanding of the most important chess principles. The rest is quite simple.

29... ♖×f2 30. ♖c8+ ♖g8 31. ♖e5 ♖g7 32. ♖×g6+ ♖h7 33. ♖f8+ ♖h6 34. ♖×d7 ♖×d7 35. ♖c×g8 ♖×f4 36. ♕×e6 ♖e7 36. ♖8g6+ ♖h7 38. ♕g8+ ♖h8 39. ♖h6+ ♖h7 40. ♖×h7# 1-0

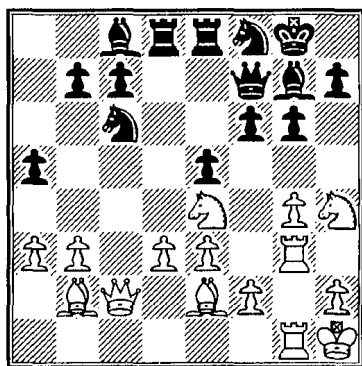
Here is the Fischer game. Later on we will meet this game's immediate predecessor:

R. J. Fischer - U. Andersson
Siegen, exhibition game, 1970

1. b3 e5 2. ♕b2 ♖c6 3. c4 ♖f6 4. e3 ♕e7 5. a3 0-0 6. ♖c2 ♖e8 7. d3 ♕f8 8. ♖f3 a5 9. ♕e2 d5 10. c×d5 ♖×d5 11. ♖bd2 f6 12. 0-0 ♕e6



13. ♖h1!? ♜d7 14. ♞g1 ♞ad8
15. ♜e4 ♜f7 16. g4 g6 17. ♞g3 ♞g7
18. ♞ag1 ♜b6 19. ♜c5 ♞c8
20. ♜h4 ♜d7 21. ♜e4 ♜f8



22. ♜f5! ♞e6 23. ♜c5 ♜e7
24. ♜xg7 ♜xg7 25. g5 ♜f5 26. ♞f3
b6 27. gxf6+ ♜h8 28. ♜xe6 ♞xe6
29. d4! exd4 30. ♞c4 d3 31. ♞xd3
♞xd3 32. ♜xd3 ♞d6 33. ♜c4 ♜e6
34. ♞e5 ♞d8 35. h4 ♜d6 36. ♜g4
♜f8 37. h5 ♜e8 38. e4 ♞d2
39. ♞h3 ♜g8 40. hxg6 ♜xg6 41. f4
♜f8 42. ♜g5 ♜d6 43. ♞xd6+ 1-0

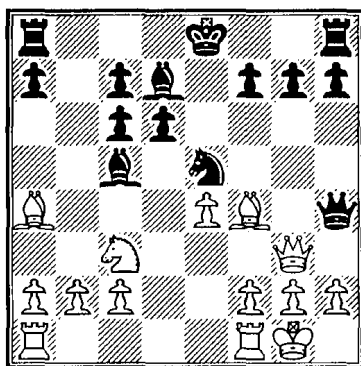
The next several games of the Congress did not go well for Morphy. In the first he committed a horrendous blunder and instead of an elementary forced win he was just down the exchange; only some solid “help” from his opponent enabled him to draw the game. And he played

the next game with the same color since draws in this tournament were to be replayed. (If we had to play chess to-day by that system, chess could become one of the elements of “Extreme Sports!”)

Morphy lost the replay. The study of such games helps achieve the goals of our research. Losses are useful because they reveal shortcomings, either as an organic part of the player or simply as a sign of a gap in his chess education. We will investigate this.

Paulsen, L. - Morphy, P.
First American Congress,
New York (4.3), 1857

1. e4 e5 2. ♜f3 ♜c6 3. ♜c3 ♞c5
4. ♞b5 d6 5. d4 exd4 6. ♜xd4 ♞d7
7. ♜xc6 bxc6 8. ♞a4 ♜h4 9. 0-0
♜f6 10. ♜f3 ♜g4 11. ♞f4 ♜e5
12. ♜g3



12... ♜f6?!

Morphy has obtained a favorable position and with 12... ♜xg3 13. ♞xg3 ♜c4 he could have entered a slightly better endgame. He did not avoid endgames and rarely would he consciously aim for complicated positions when simpler means were available. Apparently he

avoids the exchange of queens to play uncompromisingly for the win and goes against both the needs of the position and his own approach to the game. Moreover, the move turns out to be a loss of time! It may not yet be a mistake, but it was surely a step in the wrong direction.

13. ♖ad1 h6

This and the next move are the continuation of the plan begun with his queen retreat. Taken together, they make a strange impression. We will again see, only rarely, such decisions to artificially complicate the play in Morphy's games and they turn out badly for him every time. It could happen to any young and insufficiently experienced player. Time and experience cure this impulse, but in Morphy's case, unfortunately, there wouldn't be enough of a future!

14. ♕h1

The position sharpens and every tempo grows vital. So the more incisive 14. ♖e2!? g5 15. ♖d2 was stronger, giving White the choice of several positional threats – preparing f2-f4 or bringing the bishop to c3 and the knight to d4.

14...g5 15. ♖×e5?!

White makes a substantive decision, giving up his bishop in a fairly open position. Now Black's pawn structure is weakened on the queenside and in the center, but his dark-squared bishop is strengthened as is his control of the dark squares. Such a "transformation" seems to favor Black in this position. I would have preferred 15. ♖c1!? g4

16. ♖e2 h5 and now 17. ♖d4 or 17. ♖f4 in both cases favoring White.

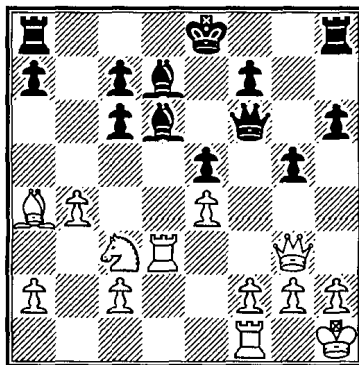
15...d×e5

15... ♖×e5 wasn't bad either, but Morphy has no intention of swerving from his "principled" line.

16. b4!? ♖d6

Snapping off the pawn would have been bad: 16... ♖×b4? 17. ♖×d7 ♖×d7 18. ♖d5 ♖d6 19. ♖×b4 ♖×b4 20. ♖d1+ ♖c8 21. ♖×c6 ♖b8 22. ♖×e5 and wins.

17. ♖d3



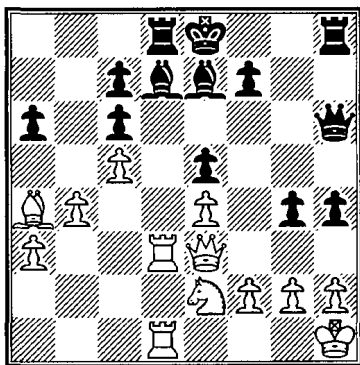
17...h5?

This is a serious mistake. By being stubborn, Morphy misses the last chance for a favorable trade of queens *before* White doubles rooks in the center: 17... ♖f4! 18. ♖fd1 ♖×g3 (18... a6?! 19. ♖×f4 e×f4?? 20. e5 lends credence to the preceding commentary.) 19. h×g3 a6 20. ♖e2 0-0-0 (or 20... ♖e7) with a decent game for Black.

18. ♖fd1 a6 19. ♖e2!

Paulsen finds a strong and simple plan and Black's game slides irreversibly downhill.

19...♖d8 20.a3 g4 21.c4 ♗h6
22.c5 h4 23.♗e3 ♕e7



The problem with Black's position is shown by 23...♗e3?? 24.fxe3 ♕e7 25.♖xd7.

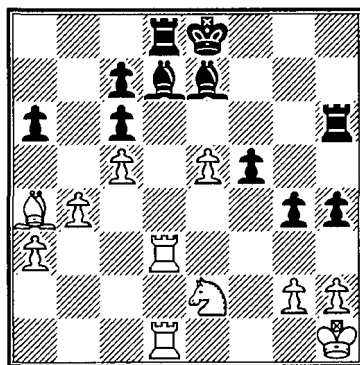
24.f4!

Again, Paulsen finds the strongest continuation. He played well in this game.

24...exf4 25.♗xf4

25.♗d2!? f3 26.gxf3 gxf3 27.♖f4 was also strong with a big advantage.

25...♗xf4 26.♖xf4 ♖h6 27.♖e2 f5!? 28.e5



28.exf5?! ♕xf5 would have freed Black's game.

28...♖e6?

Morphy commits an elementary oversight in a difficult position. But even after the better 28...♕g5 29.♖d4 White would still have had a considerable advantage.

29.♖f4! ♖xe5 30.♖xd7! ♖xd7
31.♕xc6 ♕d6 32.cxd6 cxd6
33.♗g1 ♗d8 34.♕xd7 1-0

Then came a new, fourth game, but it too brought disappointment. Morphy quickly obtained a great advantage, but was unable to bring it home.

Morphy, P. - Paulsen, L.

First American Congress,
New York (4.4), 1857

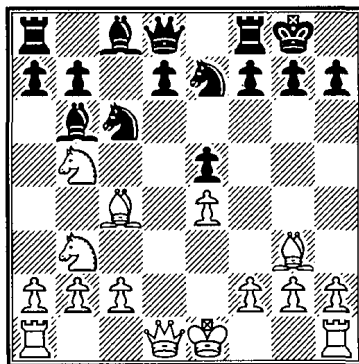
1.e4 c5 2.♖f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♖xd4 ♕c5 5.♖b3 ♕b6 6.♖c3
♖c6?!

Paulsen tries to improve on Game 1, but still runs into great difficulties.

7.♕f4 e5

Here is the point of Black's new move order.

8.♕g3 ♖ge7 9.♕c4 0-0 10.♖b5?!



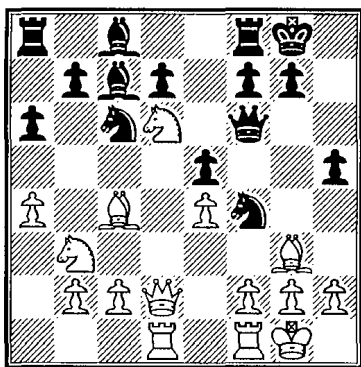
Having again achieved a clear advantage from the opening, Morphy begins

to play feebly. One can feel his nervousness, no doubt brought on by the events of the previous two games. First 10.♖d2 d6 and only then 11.♗b5 would have been much better.

10...a6?

Paulsen fails to exploit the chance offered to him. Had Morphy been playing in his place, undoubtedly he would have found 10...d5! with the following sample continuations: 11.e×d5 ♖a5 12.♗×a5 (on 12.♗a3 ♗×c4 13.♗×c4 ♗×d5 14.♗×e5 f6 Black obtains good counterplay.) 12...♗×a5+ 13.c3 a6 14.♗a3 b5 with complex play. Now, however, White obtains a great advantage.

11.♗d6 ♗c7 12.a4 ♗g6 13.♖d2 ♖f6 14.♗d1 ♗f4 15.0-0 h5

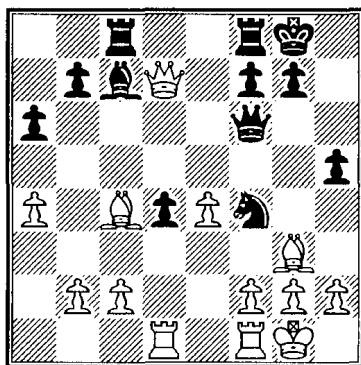


16.♗×c8

Here is another episode of this game on which I would like to dwell in some detail. Contrary to the generally accepted impressions of his playing style, Morphy acts in complete contrast to the principle of development, simply picking off his opponent's weak pawn. This supports that Morphy was a far more deep and complex player than the books

would have you believe. The opinions of the great masters – which we will read later on – were much closer to the truth, but they did not write about Morphy in any depth. That is what this book is – an attempt at deeper analysis.

16...♗a×c8 17.♖×d7 ♗d4 18.♗×d4 e×d4



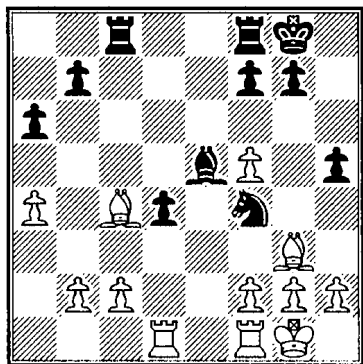
19.♖f5

It's interesting to compare Morphy's play here with his play in previous games where he went overboard in his attempt to create complications. This time he tries for maximum simplicity, which is a much better fit with his natural predisposition. In this game, however, fate played a small joke on him. A more convincing continuation in this particular position would have been to leave the queens on: 19.♗×f4! ♖×f4 20.g3 ♖f6 21.f4! ♗fd8 22.♖h3 ♖g6 23.♗d3 and Black is quite helpless against White's direct kingside assault. In this case the presence of opposite-colored bishops merely reduces the defender's resources.

19...♖×f5 20.e×f5 ♗e5?

Again, Paulsen "reprises" his opponent. 20...♗h3+! was correct, and after 21.g×h3 ♗×g3 22.h×g3 (22.♗×f7+?!

♖xf7 23.f×g3 ♖xc2 promises less.)
22...♖xc4 23.b3 ♖xc2 24.♖xd4 ♖e8
any advantage left to White would have
questionable chances of exploitation.



21.♙xf4?!

Another overly simple decision proves
unfortunate. Both of Morphy's over-
sights involved the opposite-colored
bishops, apparently because of insuffi-
cient experience. The theory of such
situations was then in its infancy. The
simple 21.b3 was stronger, for ex-
ample: 21...b5 22.a×b5 a×b5 23.♙×b5
♖xc2 24.♖fe1 ♖c5 25.♙c4 ♙b8
26.♖xd4 ♖xf5 27.♖d7 with good win-
ning chances.

21...♙xf4 22.♖xd4 ♙e5 23.♖e4
♙×b2 24.♖b1 ♖fd8!

Paulsen defends excellently.

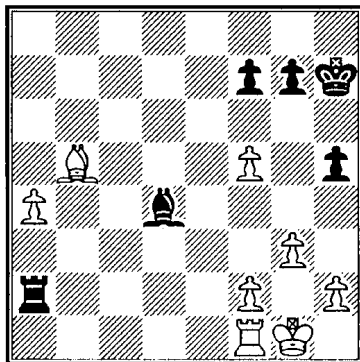
25.g3

On 25.♙d3 Black has 25...b6! 26.♙f1
(after 26.♖×b2 ♖xd3 the draw becomes
almost unavoidable) 26...♙d4 27.♖h4
♙f6 28.♖h5 ♖d4 29.♖×b6 ♖×a4
30.♖h3 a5 and it's unclear whether or
not White can win.

25...♖d4! 26.♙d3 ♖×e4 27.♙×e4
♖c4 28.♙×b7

28.♙d3 ♖b4 29.a5 ♙f8 30.♙f1 ♙e7
31.♙e2 ♙d6 or 28.♖×b2 ♖×e4
29.♖×b7 ♖×a4 promise White little.

28...♖xc2 29.♙×a6 ♙d4 30.♖f1
♖a2 31.♙b5 ♙h7



32.♙c4?!

Now the draw is forced. Even after
32.h4 g6 33.f×g6+ f×g6 34.♙g2 ♙g7
35.♙f3 ♙b6 36.♙g2 White cannot im-
prove his position without giving up the
f2-pawn and I still cannot see how
White can win.

32...♖×a4 33.♙×f7 h4! 34.♙g2
♖a1 35.♙g6+ ♙g8 36.♖×a1 ♙×a1
½-½

White cannot win in this position de-
spite his two extra pawns.

Morphy must have been disappointed
after such an unlucky series of games,
which probably caused him to doubt his
abilities. Such situations are well
known and everybody reacts to them
in his own way. There are those who
become entirely disoriented and lose
the match and there are those who find
the strength to overcome. The next
game was long and tense, which is a
fair characterization of other critical
situations in his matches.

Morphy, P. - Paulsen, L.

First American Congress, New York
(4.5), 1857

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.d4 c×d4
4.♟×d4 ♙c5 5.♙e3 ♚b6 6.♟b5

Morphy would strengthen this line by playing 6.♟c3! in the next game. Paulsen, who was demoralized by then, replied with the terrible blunder 6...♚×b2? and Morphy swiftly won after 7.♟db5 ♙×e3 8.♞b1. Even after the superior 6...♟c6 White would have kept the better chances, for instance: 7.♟db5 ♙×e3 8.f×e3 ♚×e3+ 9.♙e2 as numerous practical examples have shown. Based on this and a number of other examples we can see that Morphy could, as the need arose, seek means of strengthening his opening lines – that is, he would do his homework when necessary.

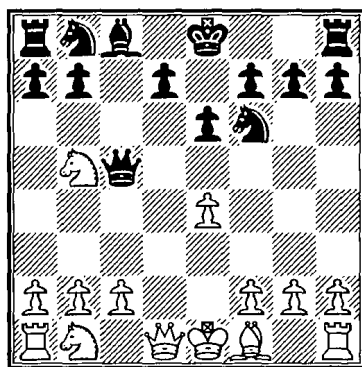
I do not bring this up to talk about our hero's contribution to opening theory, which was not great, but to demonstrate facts that will help us come to preliminary conclusions about how Morphy's talent grew and what level he might have attained had he continued to play and work intensively on his chess. For we ought not to forget that he was, despite the notable results demonstrated during his European tour, just a very young man. By the standards of his day he was still a child and a most inexperienced player! Today, the period at which a chessplayer reaches his full strength is considered to be between the 25th and 35th years. But then chessplayers matured at a slower pace. Even someone like Paul Morphy, who matured so early in the chess sense, still had many years of possible growth and

serious maturation of his chess strength ahead of him. Although this whole topic exists under the banner, "If only...", it can still provide interest, since it touches upon such a standout figure in the history of chess. Therefore, I will continue evaluating this theme in the further course of the book. For now, I would like to point out that, in principle, had Morphy's chess career continued we might have expected thoughtful groundwork comparable to what brought Steinitz to the discovery of a number of vital principles.

6...♟f6?!

Black should have played consistently and taken on e3. After the likely 6...♙×e3 7.f×e3 ♚×e3+ 8.♙e2 ♟a6 9.♟1c3 White would have compensation for the pawn, but nothing more serious. In the game his advantage could have become much more imposing.

7.♙×c5 ♚×c5



8.♟d6+?

Unbelievable! Morphy trades off a developed and active piece, while aiding his opponent's development and gets nothing in return. It's easy to tell how

off balance he was from his previous misfortunes. The obvious continuation 8.♖c3 ♕e7 9.♗d2 would have left White with a long-standing, clear advantage.

8...♔e7 9.♟xc8+ ♖xc8 10.♞d3
♟c6

We have noted that Paulsen avoided sharp continuations when playing Morphy. So he does not risk taking the pawn: 10...♖b4+ 11.♘d2 ♗xb2 and, subjectively, he was quite right.

11.0-0 h5!?

Having reached a safe, stable position Black is no longer content with a quiet continuation such as 11...♘f8 12.♖c3 ♗e5 with equal chances; he tries to seize territory on the flank. Positionally, such play was justified. From the course of this and a few of the preceding games one can see that Morphy had quite a serious opponent on his hands.

12.♟d2 h4 13.h3 g5 14.a3

I would have preferred the plan with 14.c3? a possible continuation being: 14...g4 15.hxg4 Bg8 16..Ae2 dxe5 17.dxb3 Bb6 18..Wd4.

14...♖g8

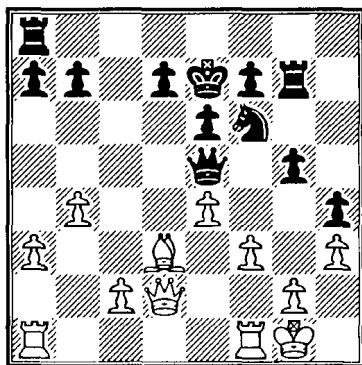
Paulsen avoids sharp, active play with 14...g4!? 15.hxg4 ♖g8 when he probably shouldn't have. It could have had an unpleasant effect on his psychologically shaken opponent.

15.b4 ♔b6 16.♘c4 ♔c7 17.f3
♘e5

On 17...d5 18.♖e3 dxe4 19..♗xe4
♗xe4 20.fxe4 ♖e5 White can choose

between 21.c4, 21.♖e2 or 21.♕g4.
Then the game would have become
sharp and unclear.

18.♘xe5 ♔xe5 19.♔d2 ♖g7



It's very interesting that Paulsen avoids the possibility of a draw with 19...♖d4+ 20.♗h1 (20.♗f2 ♜xf2+ 21.♜xf2 d6 22.c4 ♞d7 23.♞e3 is an equal ending.) 20...♞h5 21.♟f1 ♞g3+ 22.♞h2 ♜e5 23.♞g1 ♖d4. He senses his opponent's irresoluteness and continues the fight.

20. 馬ad1 馬d8 21. 王f2 b6 22. f4
gxf4 23. 王xf4 王g5 24. 王f2 王xf4
25. 王xf4 馬dg8

Perhaps 25...d5!? 26.exd5 ♖xd5
27.♙xh4 ♜e3 28.♙d2 ♜xc2 29.♙xc2
♙xd3 was more accurate, but Paulsen
wanted to fight and play for a win. His
avoidance of the forced draw is under-
standable, but such a strategy gives
Morphy chances.

26.♖d2 ♜h8 27.e5 ♜d5 28.♖d4 f6
29.exf6+ ♜xf6 30.♖c4 ♜d8 31.a4
♜d5 32.♙e4 ♜c7

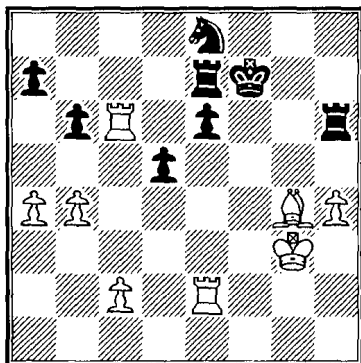
The alternative 32...♟f4 33.♙b7 ♖f8
34.♜c8+ ♜e7 35.♜xd7+ ♜xd7
36.♜xf8 ♜xh3+ 37.♜h2 ♜g5 38.♜f4

with a slight advantage to White, as we have already seen, could not have been of interest to Paulsen.

33. ♖f3 d5 34. ♖c6 ♖d7 35. ♖g4 ♖h6 36. ♖e2 ♗e7 37. ♗h2 ♗f7

The upshot: White now seizes the initiative, although Black's position is quite solid.

38. g3 h×g3+ 39. ♗×g3 ♖e7 40. h4 ♖e8



41. h5

41. c4!? d×c4 42. ♖×c4 looked more promising – besides containing the trap 42... ♖f6? 43. ♖×e6+!.

41... ♖f6 42. ♖c×e6 ♖×e6

42... ♖c7 also leads to a simple draw.

43. ♖×e6+ ♗g7?

Paulsen is the first to flinch! The obvious 43... ♗f8 would have left White with insignificant chances after 44. ♖e5 (or 44. ♖g4 ♖×h5+ 45. ♖×h5 ♖×h5 46. ♗g4 ♖h7 with a draw.) 44... ♖×h5+ 45. ♗f3 ♖f6 46. ♖×d5 ♖×d5 47. ♖×d5 ♖c6. Now it's all downhill.

44. ♖g4 ♖×h5+ 45. ♖×h5+ ♖×h5 46. ♖e7+ ♗f6 47. ♖×a7 ♗e5

White also wins after 47... ♖e5 48. ♖a6 ♖e3+ 49. ♗f2 ♖c3 50. ♖×b6+ ♗e5 51. ♗e2 ♖×c2+ 52. ♗d3 ♖a2 53. a5 ♖a3+ 54. ♗c2 ♗d4 55. ♖c6.

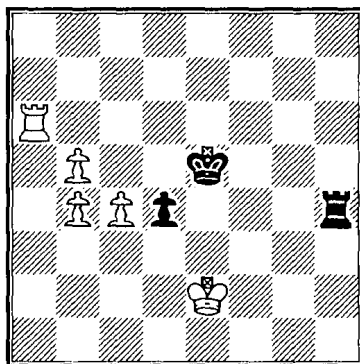
48. ♖a6 ♖g5+

48... ♖h6 would have held out longer; although upon 49. a5 ♖c6 50. ♖×b6 ♖c3+ 51. ♗g4 ♖×c2 52. a6 ♖a2 53. b5 d4 54. ♗f3 White still wins.

49. ♗f3 ♖f5+ 50. ♗e2 b5

Paulsen looks for chances even in a totally lost position. That's the sign of a good player! White's win is simple after 50... ♖f6 51. a5.

51. a×b5 ♖f4 52. c3 d4 53. c4 ♖h4



54. c5

Morphy chooses the most secure route – the forcing line. In such situations, although a tired player might have to stretch his limits, one can avoid unnecessarily extended hours of playing time.

54... ♖h2+

White also has an easy win after 54... d3+ 55. ♗×d3 ♖×b4 56. ♖d6 ♖×b5 57. ♗c4 ♖b1 58. ♖h6.

55.♖d3 ♜h3+ 56.♖c2 ♜h2+
 57.♖b3 ♜h3+ 58.♖a4 ♖d5
 59.♞d6+ ♖c4 60.c6 ♜h1
 61.♞x d4+

61.♖a5 wins as well.

61...♖x d4 62.c7 ♜h8 63.b6 ♖c4
 64.b7 1-0

The effect of this result on the feelings of the participants at such a point in the duel is always substantial, and here it provides the turning point of the match. The next game became one of the most notable in Paul Morphy's legacy. It was well annotated by Kasparov in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on pages 32-34 and I will take the liberty of quoting a number of his variations.

Paulsen, L. - Morphy, P.

First American Congress, New York
 (4.6), 1857

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♟c3 ♟f6
 4.♞b5 ♞c5 5.0-0-0 6.♟x e5 ♞e8

As Kasparov points out 6...♟x e5 7.d4 ♞d6 8.f4 ♟c6 9.e5 ♞e7! with roughly equal chances is better. But this was not yet known then.

7.♟x c6

Theory prefers 7.♟f3 ♟x e4 8.d4 ♟x c3 9.bxc3 ♞f8 10.d5 as being more precise, but the text continuation is quite playable.

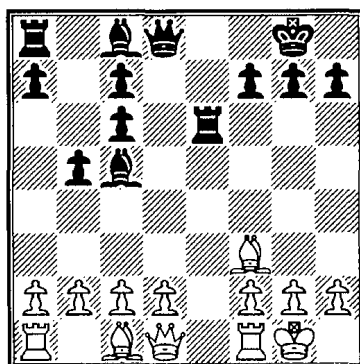
7...dxc6 8.♞c4 b5

This weakening is necessary: 8...♟x e4? 9.♟x e4 ♞x e4 10.♞xf7+.

9.♞e2 ♟x e4 10.♟x e4

10.♞f3? ♟xf2! 11.♞xf2 ♖d4 and Black wins.

10...♞x e4 11.♞f3 ♞e6



12.c3?

The outcome of the preceding game begins to tell. Paulsen lacks confidence in his own powers, which always leads to an uneven "lunging" sort of play, when false threats are often mistaken as real, while real and obvious threats are overlooked. After the natural 12.d3 White would still have a slight advantage.

12...♖d3 13.b4?!

One more inaccuracy, the immediate 13.♞e1 ♞x e1+ 14.♖x e1 was better. Kasparov gives the following continuation: 14...♞f5! 15.♞xc6 (15.♖e2 ♞d8! according to Kasparov, but after 16.♖xd3 ♞xd3 17.♞xc6 ♞d6 18.b4 Black's advantage would be slight.) 15...♞d8 16.♖e5 ♖c2 17.♞f3 ♞d6 18.♖xb5 ♞d3 19.♖c6 ♖f8! (Kasparov) 20.h3 ♞e8 when White is worse; but this variation is not forced for White.

13...♞b6 14.a4 bxa4 15.♖xa4 ♞d7?

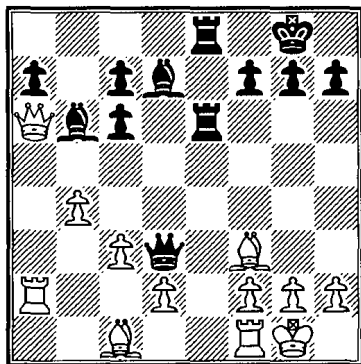
Morphy commits a very serious error.

After the correct 15...♖b7! 16.♜d1 (more accurate than 16.♜a2 ♜ae8 17.♜d1 ♜a6 as given by Kasparov.) 16...♜ae8 17.♜g4 ♜e5 18.♜f3 ♜a6 19.♜xa6 (19.♜xc6? ♜xf1+ 20.♜xf1 ♜xf1 21.♜xe8 ♜d3--) 19...♜xa6 20.d4 ♜5e6 Black would have had good winning chances. But Paulsen makes a grievous blunder in return. The preceding game must have cost both players plenty.

16.♜a2?

The decisive error. After the obvious and forced, but still powerful 16.♜a6! Black would have had to seek salvation by 16...♜f5 17.d4 ♜ae8 18.♜e3 c5 19.bxc5 ♜xc5 20.♜b7 ♜d6 21.c4 according to Kasparov. 16...♜xa6?! is worse: 17.♜xa6 ♜ae8 18.♜g4 ♜6e7 18.♜xd7 ♜xd7 20.d4 with great advantage to White.

16...♜ae8 17.♜a6



After 17.♜d1 c5 there is no defense against ♜d7-b5. 17.♜c2 ♜xf1+ loses at once; as does 17.g3 ♜e1. But here comes the spectacular blow that made this game famous.

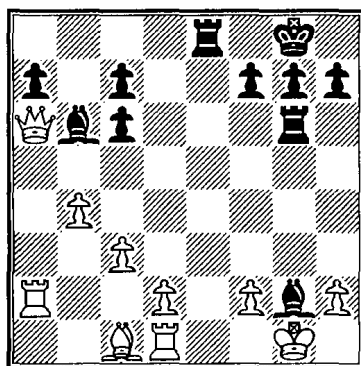
17...♜xf3!! 18.gxf3 ♜g6+ 19.♜h1 ♜h3 20.♜d1

20.♜d3!? would have prolonged the game, but Black still wins after 20...f5! 21.♜c4+ ♜f8! 22.♜f4 (or 22.♜h4 ♜xf1--) 22...♜xf2. This line had to be calculated before sacrificing his queen, which would have been an easy task for Morphy.

20...♜g2+ 21.♜g1 ♜xf3+ 22.♜f1 ♜g2+

As Zukertort later pointed out, another forced win was 22...♜g2! 23.♜d3 ♜xf2+ 24.♜g1 ♜g2+ 25.♜h1 ♜g1#.

23.♜g1



23...♜h3+?

Morphy misses the most accurate win: 23...♜e4+! 24.♜f1 ♜f5!. This is part of a characteristic picture – the stress of his previous troubles in the match has its effect.

24.♜h1 ♜xf2 25.♜f1 ♜xf1 26.♜xf1 ♜e2 27.♜a1

Total demoralization; Black would still have had to do some heavy lifting after 27.♜b2.

27...♜h6 28.d4 ♜e3! 0-1

After such a defeat, it was impossible for Paulsen to recover. He put up only

token resistance in the remaining games and Morphy scored two easy victories. Out of 11 games against Morphy, Paulsen could only score 2½ points. What can you say, between a real genius and a simply gifted player, there's an impassable gulf.

Thus, the first serious event of Paul Morphy's chess career came to a brilliant close. This event, and especially the match with Paulsen, brought him invaluable experience both in a strictly chess sense and the experience of a real over-the-board struggle. One may confidently state that without the genuinely priceless experience he obtained at the First American Chess Congress, Morphy would have had a more difficult time on his European tour. It could be that without the boost of self-confidence that this event undoubtedly brought he might not have traveled abroad.

Upon returning from New York to his hometown of New Orleans, Morphy gave two blindfold simultaneous exhibitions. He played with dash and inspiration. Of course, his opponents were not very strong players and the mistakes they made were sometimes laughable, but we are only interested in the play of Morphy. I would like to show you some of these games, partly because of the benefit they can give to our research and partly to derive from them some satisfaction at the beauty of chess in its pure and simple form.

P. Morphy - N. N.

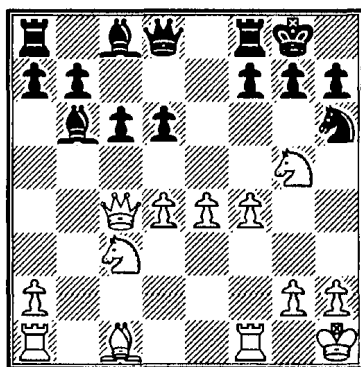
New Orleans, blindfold simul (I), 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5
4.b4 ♙×b4 5.c3 ♙c5 6.0-0 d6 7.d4

e×d4 8.c×d4 ♙b6 9.♘c3 ♘a5
10.♘g5

This is not the best move. Mikhail Chigorin, the greatest specialist in the Evans Gambit, who played this opening for both sides with great success, would only play 10.♙g5!. Robert J. Fischer later followed Chigorin's example. So although Fischer was a great admirer of Morphy, I think the truth meant more to him.

10...♘×c4 11.♙a4+ c6 12.♙×c4
♘h6 13.♙h1 0-0 14.f4



14...♙h8

This move doesn't spoil anything by itself, however, it was made with misguided intentions. The standard central counterstroke: 14...d5! 15.e×d5 ♘f5 was much better and would have given Black an indisputable advantage.

15.f5 f6?

The decisive positional error, after which Black's game becomes very difficult strategically. The break 15...d5! 16.e×d5 ♙×f5 would have been even more effective than on the previous move.

Given the great gap in the caliber of the players there could have been no

serious struggle in the games from this exhibition. In that sense these games have little to teach us. But there is something else you can see in them. In such games many strategic, tactical, and technical operations are executed in “pure form” allowing us to see them clearly and concretely, not just in the annotator’s words. I have selected these games on the basis of their attractiveness, and more importantly, on the effectiveness of the plan to convert the advantage, once obtained. Their value as a study aid from this viewpoint ought to be considerable, since everyone knows how difficult it can be to convert a sizable advantage or to win a won game. Morphy knew how to convert his advantage spectacularly and efficiently like few others in chess history. Here’s a direct demonstration of this.

16. ♖e6 ♗xе6 17. f×e6 ♜e7?

Now Black’s position completely falls apart. 17... ♖g8 was necessary.

18. ♗xh6 g×h6 19. ♖f3 ♖g8
20. ♖af1 ♖g6 21. ♖e2 ♖f8 22. ♖f4
♖g5 23. d5 c5?!

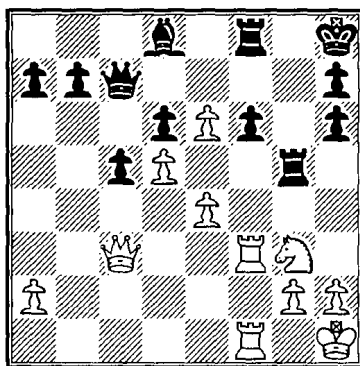
This move clearly shows the level of Black’s play. He had to maintain the central tension by 23... ♗c5 if only to clear his conscience.

24. ♜c3 ♗d8 25. ♖e2 ♜g7 26. ♖g3
♜c7

(See next diagram.)

27. ♖×f6!

This sacrifice wouldn’t have required any special calculation, but it shows



that one should be decisive and fearless even in winning positions. Victory doesn’t come by itself, after all – she loves to be pursued madly.

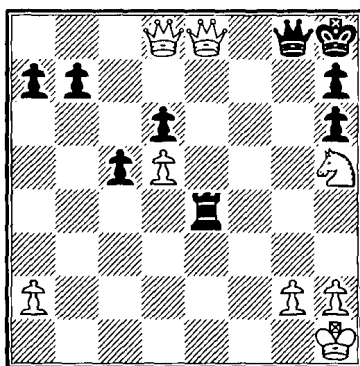
27... ♗×f6 28. ♖×f6 ♖×f6
29. ♜×f6+ ♜g7

On 29... ♜g8 White has a pretty win by 30. e7 ♜c8 31. ♜e6+!

30. ♜d8+ ♜g8 31. e7!

31. ♜×d6 would have won easily, but Morphy chooses a different route, requiring accurate, though perhaps not very complicated calculation.

31... ♖e5 32. ♖h5! ♖×e4 33. e8♜!



This miraculous position is beautiful in and of itself, but it also needed to be foreseen and accurately evaluated –

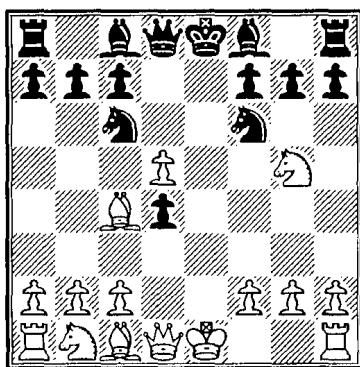
White had to calculate all the consequences back on move 31 – blindfold! That’s a notable achievement.

33...♖e1+ 34.♗×e1 ♗×d8
35.♗c3+ 1-0

P. Morphy - N. N.

New Orleans, blindfold simul (II), 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♞c4 ♟f6
4.d4 exd4 5.♟g5 d5 6.exd5



6...♟d5?

This error, in a slightly different situation, has been known for four centuries. 6...♟a5 is good, but 6...♗e7+! would be stronger still.

7.0-0 ♞e7

Surprisingly, this position had never appeared in chess history prior to this game.

8.♟×f7! ♗×f7 9.♗f3+ ♗e6

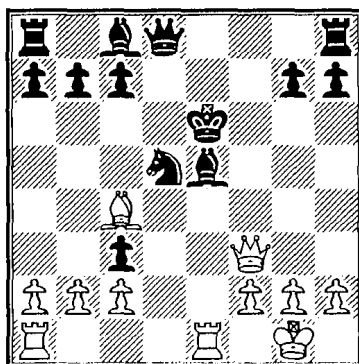
Black had to give the piece back by 9...♞f6.

10.♟c3!

10.♖e1+ ♟e5 11.♗e4 would also have been good here, but Morphy chose the more spectacular path of rapid mobili-

zation. Other games following the same course have been played repeatedly. Even Fischer had this position in one of his simul games! He gave the rook check first and then their paths diverged slightly.

10...d×c3 11.♖e1+ ♟e5 12.♞f4
♞d6 13.♞×e5 ♞×e5



14.♖×e5+!

The paradoxical idea behind the exchange sacrifice is to increase White’s temporary advantage on that part of the board where a sharp struggle is taking place, by a whole piece! White’s a1-rook in the diagrammed position plays no part in the struggle at this moment. But in one move, it will replace its colleague on the field of battle, while the black bishop will be gone. This approach to the game is strictly *dynamic* – that is, aimed at a rapid alteration of circumstance, a lightning change in fact! We have seen the intersection of the ideas of “Morphy” and “dynamics.” The point of the present book is to show that *Morphy taught all succeeding generations how to understand the basis of dynamics in chess in all its aspects.* The rest of the game is simple.

14...♗×e5 15.♖e1+ ♗d4
16.♞×d5! ♖f8 17.♗d3+ ♗c5

18.b4+ ♖×b4 19.♗d4+ 1-0

P. Morphy - N. N.

New Orleans, blindfold simul (II), 1858

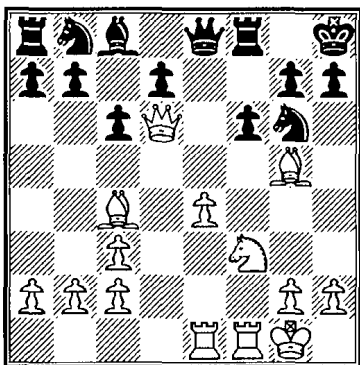
1.e4 e5 2.f4 e×f4 3.♟f3 c6 4.♟c3
♙b4 5.♙c4 ♙×c3?

Again we see a most grievous violation of the basic principles of chess, one that simply grates on our modern sensibilities. Black pointlessly hands his opponent the advantage of the two bishops, trades off his only developed piece, and worst – he irrevocably weakens his dark squares. 5...d5! (6.e×d5 ♟f6) would have been more to the point.

6.d×c3 ♟e7

Black had to play ...d7-d5.

7.♗d6 0-0 8.♙×f4 ♟g6 9.♙g5
♗e8 10.0-0 ♖h8 11.♞ae1 f6



Strategically, White has obtained a completely winning position. His advantage rests on the severe weakness of the dark squares in the enemy position and on his great lead in development. It would be enough for White to simply retreat the bishop, say to c1 or e3, and then to gradually crush his opponent. But with such a position, it would be a shame not to exploit White's advantage in development.

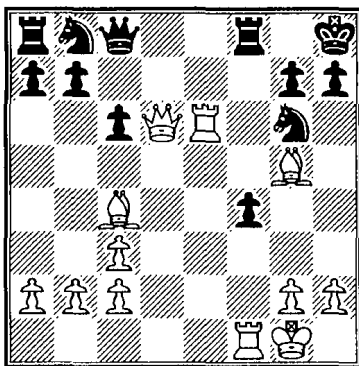
12.e5!!

Quite characteristic of Morphy – his piece is attacked, but he goes forward nevertheless. This is yet another example of a parallel with Fischer!

12...f5

Black can't bring himself to open the floodgates for his opponent. That would have been hopeless as well, one possible line was: 12...fxg5 13.♟×g5 b5 (13...h6 14.♗×g6!) 14.♟f7+ ♖g8 15.♙b3 ♙a6 16.♗d1 ♞×f7 17.♙×f7+ ♗×f7 18.♞×f7 ♖×f7 19.♞f1+ ♖g8 20.♗d6 ♞b8 21.e6 and White wins.

13.♟d4 f4 14.e6 d×e6 15.♟×e6
♙×e6 16.♞×e6 ♗c8



17.♞×g6! h×g6 18.♗×g6 ♗f5

White's sacrifice required accurate, but not very deep, calculation. Black also loses after 18...♗e8 19.♗×e8 ♞×e8 20.♞×f4 ♖h7 21.♙f7.

19.♞×f4! ♗×g6

Or 19...♗c5+ 20.♖h1 ♗×c4 21.♞×f8.

20.♞×f8+ ♖h7 21.♙g8+ ♖h8
22.♙f7+ ♖h7 23.♙×g6+ ♖×g6
24.♙f4 1-0

Part Two: Europe

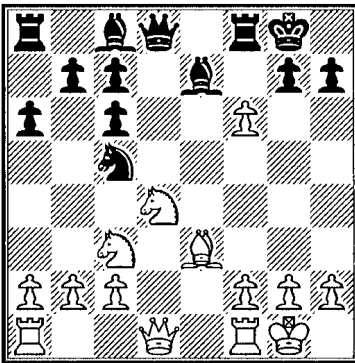
The trip to Europe was the most important chapter Paul Morphy's chess career, and so we will conduct a detailed analysis of this period.

Having arrived in London, Morphy was unable to achieve his primary aim, which was a match against Howard Staunton, so he had to content himself with crossing swords against less famous adversaries. The first was Thomas Barnes, who had plenty of experience against the best English players, and so proved to be a more difficult opponent than the American opposition Morphy was familiar with.

Barnes, T. - Morphy, P.

London, offhand game, July 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 ♘f6
4.d4 exd4 5.e5 ♘e4 6.0-0 a6
7.♙a4 ♘c5 8.♙xc6 dxc6 9.♘xd4
♙e7 10.♘c3 0-0 11.♙e3 f6
12.exf6



12.f4!? deserved serious consideration.

12...♙xf6!?

Not a routine decision; Morphy plans to transfer all his forces to the kingside.

13.♖e2

Barnes ignores Morphy's plan. It would have been sensible to cool the fires of battle with a few exchanges. After 13.♙g5!? ♔d6 14.♙xe7 ♖xe7 15.♖e2 White retains a small advantage because of his superior pawn structure.

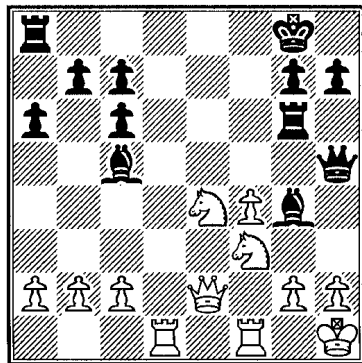
13...♙g6 14.♖h1 ♙d6 15.♙ad1
♖h4 16.f4

16.♘f3!? was more precise: 16...♖g4 (16...♖h5? 17.♙xc5 ♖xc5 18.♖e8+ ♙f8 19.♘e5 ♙f6 20.♘e4 and White wins.) 17.♙g1 ♘e6 with an unclear position.

16...♙g4 17.♘f3 ♖h5 18.♙xc5

A somewhat surprising choice, but in those days the advantage of the bishop pair had not yet been formulated as a tenet of theory. Such decisions were made on an intuitive basis or after calculating variations. This time it almost worked for White.

18...♙xc5 19.♘e4



19...♙b6?!

And here is why it almost worked:

Morphy, having nearly outplayed his opponent, makes a strange error. White wishes to attack the black king with his knights and queen. Therefore, the logical response would be to take the e5-square under control with 19...♘d6! and after 20.♗xd6 (20.♗g3?! ♖b5!? 21.c4 ♗a5 is worse leaving Black with an incontrovertible advantage; 20.♗eg5?! ♜f6 21.♗e4 ♜xf4 22.♗xd6 cxd6 23.♜xd6 ♜e8 is also bad, with a clear advantage to Black.) 20...cxd6 21.♗e7 ♗b5 Black retains a small, long-lasting advantage.

But now White executes his plan:

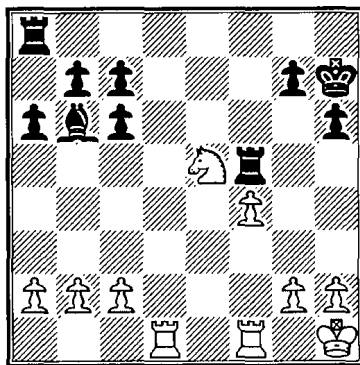
20.♗eg5 h6?!

Morphy declines the draw he could have had with the objectively best line: 20...♜f6 21.♗c4+ ♖h8 (21...♗f8? would lose to 22.♗e5! ♗xd1 23.♗d7+ ♖e7 24.♗xf6 gxf6 25.♜e1+) 22.♗e5! ♗xd1 23.♗ef7+ ♖g8 24.♗h6+ ♖h8 25.♗gf7+ ♜xf7 26.♗xf7+ ♖g8 27.♗e5+ ♖h8 with a repetition.

Here's another characteristic of Morphy's worth emphasizing: as a notably combative player he would avoid draws until all resources were completely exhausted. Sometimes, he would do this at some risk to himself – or even great risk as in the present case. This kind of approach cannot fail to arouse our admiration. Again, we see an attribute in common with Fischer: an uncompromising, phenomenal lust for battle, which occasionally – though not often – went a bit too far.

21.♗c4+ ♖h8 22.♗f7+ ♖h7
23.♗e5 ♜f6 24.♗xg4 ♗xg4
25.♗e5 ♖e6 26.♗e4+ ♗f5

27.♗xf5+ ♜xf5



28.g4

The position has turned favorable for White because of Morphy's unfortunate 19th move. He controls the open center file, his knight occupies a central support point, and he has an extra pawn on the kingside. If he had played the less ambitious 28.g3!? he would have achieved a clear, long-lasting advantage after 28...♜e8 29.♖g2 ♜e7 30.h4. The plan he selected in the game gives his opponent more chances.

28...♜f6 29.f5 ♜e8 30.♗g6?!

An unfortunate move, although it does look tempting. White would have kept a small endgame advantage after 30.♗d7 ♜f7 31.♗xb6 cxb6 32.♜d2.

30...♜e2?

Morphy errs in return and it could have cost him the game. He had to play 30...h5 and after 31.gxh5 (31.h3 hxg4 32.hxg4 ♜e2 is worse: if now 33.♜fe1? ♜xc2 34.♜e8 ♖h6 it is Black who wins.) 31...♖h6 32.♜d2 the position would be about equal. Morphy's error was a miscalculation, which we will deal with shortly.

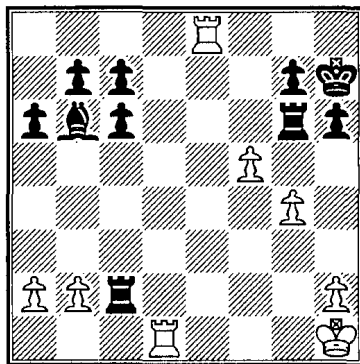
In the opinions of Anderssen and Fischer, Morphy almost never made a mistake in calculation. In fact, miscalculations were fairly frequent in his play. Yet they occurred, almost invariably, in positions where he had already secured the advantage (sometimes, a considerable one) and still had to keep an eye on the specific details of the position. Morphy would select, almost unerringly, the *general direction of activity* in nearly every case. We will find many examples supporting this observation. Therefore, the conclusion follows that Morphy's play was based, first and foremost, on his *intuition*. Bearing in mind the sharp nature of his play and his fantastically high results we must also conclude that this intuition was a genuine gift. I see in the *structure of Morphy's talent* a great deal of similarity to another tremendous native-born chess genius – that of José Raul Capablanca, despite numerous differences in their *playing styles*.

To a great extent Morphy's miscalculations were caused by his speed of play. Undoubtedly, he played so fast because he was able to grasp the essence of a position with lightning speed and define its "focal points." Capablanca, in his youth, also played very rapidly; and Fischer was the most "rapid-fire" of all who ever vied for the World Championship.

Well, let's get back to our game.

31. ♖d8?

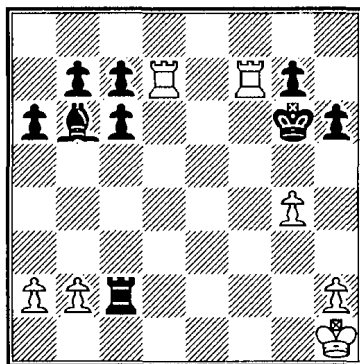
White miscalculates: 31. ♖fe1! ♖f2 (after 31... ♖xc2? 32. ♖e8 ♖xg6 (see next diagram) White has the winning line 33. ♖dd8! ♖c1+ 34. ♖g2 ♖xg4+



35. ♖h3 ♖h4+ 36. ♖xh4 g5+ 37. ♖h5 ♖g7 38. ♖e6. And after 31... ♖xc1+ 32. ♖xe1 ♖xg6 33. f×g6+ ♖xg6 34. ♖g2 with Black's only rook exchanged, White also wins.) 32. ♖d7 h5 and now 33. ♖d8! ♖xg6 (33... ♖h6 34. h4) 34. f×g6+ ♖xg6 35. g×h5+ ♖xh5 36. ♖g1 g5 37. h4! leaves White with a great advantage as pointed out by Karsten Müller.

Here, however, after eliminating the mating threats, Black can retain his all-important remaining rook and face the future with confidence.

31... ♖xg6 32. f×g6+ ♖xg6 33. ♖d7 ♖xc2 34. ♖ff7



34... ♖d4

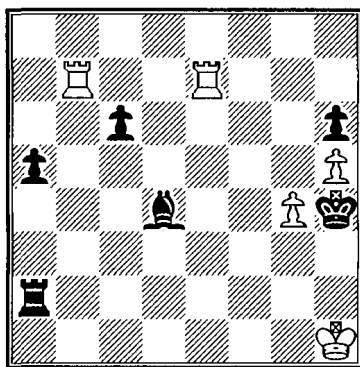
I suspect this was the move that Barnes

overlooked. Now the black bishop restricts the activity of White's rooks, while cooperating well with its own rook.

35. ♖xc7 ♜xb2 36. ♖xb7 ♜xa2
37. h4 a5 38. h5+?

Letting the enemy king out; 38. ♖fe7 would have been much better, although Black would still have an indisputable advantage.

38... ♔g5 39. ♖xg7+ ♔h4
40. ♖ge7?!



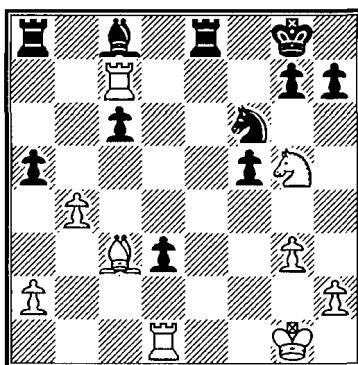
40. ♖gd7 c5 41. ♖b3 was more stubborn, even though Black should still win after 41... a4 42. ♖d3 ♔xg4. But now we get to see a beautiful finish.

40... a4! 0-1

White can no longer disturb the black king once it reaches the 3rd rank, which means that Black must achieve the complete coordination of his pieces and the white king is doomed.

This endgame is materially similar to the game Gligoric - Fischer, Siegen ol (Men) 1970. I would also like to add another very similar example on the subject of Black's last move and the idea behind it:

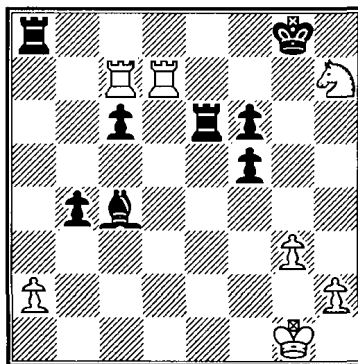
Morphy, P. - Maurian, C.
Paris, knight odds game, 1863



Here we have a position from later in Morphy's career. As always, Morphy gave his friend the odds of a knight; and Black to move would have a huge advantage after 29... ♖a6!

However, he played 29... axb4?! and after 30. ♖xf6 gxf6 31. ♔xh7 he lost his advantage with 31... ♖e6? After the stronger 31... ♖e3! restraining the white rook, White would have had a hard struggle to save himself after 32. ♖d2 ♖e6 33. ♔xf6+ ♔f8. Now the rooks are connected, which does not appear dangerous, but they are in the hands of a great artist.

32. ♖xd3 ♖a6 33. ♖dd7 ♖c4



34. a4!!

The point of this solution is the same as it was in the concluding move of the preceding game: to destroy the coordination of the enemy pieces and to cease his counterattack on the king. The nature of this threat can be seen from the variation 34.♖g7+ ♔h8 35.♟f8! ♖e1+ 36.♜f2 ♖e2+ 37.♜g1 (37.♜f3?? ♖a3+ 38.♜f4 ♖f2#) 37...♖e1+ and White must take the repetition.

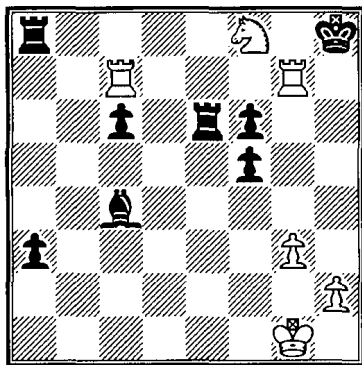
34...bxa3?

Black fails to find the solution, which was a difficult task: 34...♖ae8? loses to 35.♖g7+ ♔h8 36.♟f8! ♖e1+ 37.♜g2 ♖f1+ (37...♖1e2+ 38.♜h3+—) 38.♜f3 ♖e2+ 39.♜f2 ♖h5 40.♖h7+ ♜g8 41.♖xh5 ♖1e2+ 42.♜f3 ♖2e3+ 43.♜f4 ♖e2 44.♜xf5 ♖2e5+ 45.♜g6 ♖xh5 46.♜xh5 ♖xf8 47.♖xc6 ♖b8 48.♜g6 b3 49.♖c1.

Salvation was still possible with 34...f4!! Its point appears in the variation 35.♖d4! (The best try; if 35.♖g7+ ♔h8 36.♟f8 ♖e1+ 37.♜g2 ♖d3 saves Black – this is why he had to remove his pawn from f5!) 35...♖d5 (35...b3 is worse: after 36.♖xc4 b2 37.♟xf6+ ♜f8 38.♖b4 ♖e1+ 39.♜f2 b1♜ 40.♖xb1 ♖xb1 41.♖d7! White keeps a small advantage.) Now after 36.♖xf4 b3! 37.♟xf6+ ♖xf6 38.♖xf6 ♖b8! White has to repeat moves with 39.♖g6+ ♜f8 40.♖f6+. The actual game ended as follows:

35.♖g7+ ♔h8 36.♟f8! 1-0

The concluding position is worth a diagram. Black has only a few harmless checks; I will never forget the feeling of delight that I experienced the first time I saw this ending.



Barnes, T. - Morphy, P.

London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♖b5 a6

This is the first time that Morphy ever used this move.

4.♖a4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 ♖b4 6.♟d5 b5?!

This becomes the cause of Black's future difficulties. 6...♖a5 was better, with the continuation 7.0-0 d6 8.d3 ♖g4 9.c3 ♟d7 as in the later game Tarrasch - Chigorin, St. Petersburg (m-7) 1893.

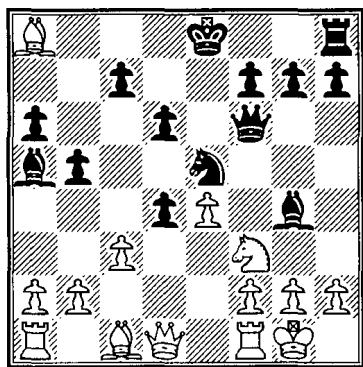
7.♖b3 d6 8.0-0 ♖g4 9.c3 ♖a5 10.d4 exd4 11.♟xf6+

Furthering Black's development; therefore, 11.cxd4 was stronger, and after 11...♖xf3 12.gxf3 ♟xd5 13.♖xd5 ♜d7 14.♖e3 White has the advantage.

11...♜xf6 12.♖d5

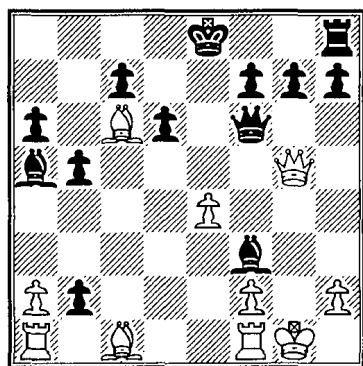
Here Black gets a chance to show some initiative. Morphy never overlooked such opportunities and his calculations were always accurate.

12...♟e5! 13.♖xa8?



Barnes clearly lacks the calculating prowess of his opponent; unable to find his way in the variations that flow from the first confrontation of pieces. 13. ♖g5 was necessary, when Black has nothing better than 13... ♗g5 14. ♘xg5 ♙xd1 15. ♙xa8 (15. cxd4 c6) 15... ♙e2 16. cxd4 (16. ♖fe1? d3 17. ♘h3 b4 is bad for White.) 16... ♙xf1 17. ♗xf1 h6 with an equal game. Now White loses.

13... ♘xf3+ 14. gxf3 ♙xf3 15. ♗d2 dxc3 16. ♗g5 cxb2 17. ♙c6+



17... ♗e7

Not the most precise move, although quite enough to win. More efficient was 17... ♗f8 to leave his opponent the narrowest choice. After 18. ♗xf6 (18. ♖b1 bxc1 ♗ 19. ♗xf6 ♗xf1+) 18... gxf6 19. ♙h6+ ♗e7 we have reached the same position as in the game, whereas

now, White has two additional possibilities. There is the simple: 18. e5 dxe5 19. ♖b1 ♙xc6 and Black wins easily; or the somewhat more complicated: 18. ♖b1 bxc1 ♗ 19. ♗xf6+ gxf6 20. ♖fc1 ♙d2 21. ♖c2 ♖g8+ 22. ♗f1 ♙f4 23. e5 d5 24. ♖c3 ♙xh2 25. ♖xf3 ♖g1+ 26. ♗e2 ♖xb1 which also wins.

The win wasn't discarded, but there is that certain carelessness that we have already noted, *when the winning position has been achieved*. And so, with all due respect to the chess genius of Paul Morphy, I cannot agree wholeheartedly with Fischer's words, as given by Kasparov in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on page 44, that: "Morphy was perhaps the most accurate chessplayer who ever lived." What we can say, with conviction, is that Morphy was only partially complete as a chessplayer! Great improvements in his game were still possible and great reserves of his talent lay undeveloped. One can only wonder to what level of mastery Morphy might have grown if he had continued to play at this high level of competition. Alas, these are only speculations.

18. ♗xf6+ gxf6

The combination begun at Black's 12th move has led almost by force to this picturesque position. White must return the rook, for just a pawn; the rest is elementary.

19. ♙f4 ♖g8+ 20. ♙g3 bxa1 ♗ 21. ♖xa1 f5 22. a4 ♙b6 23. axb5 f4 24. bxa6 fxc3 25. hxc3 ♖xc3+ 26. ♗h2 ♖g6 27. ♖f1 ♙d4 28. ♗h3 ♙e5 29. ♗h4 ♙f4 30. a7 ♖h6# 0-1

Now, let's look at some of Morphy's

games from this match with the white pieces.

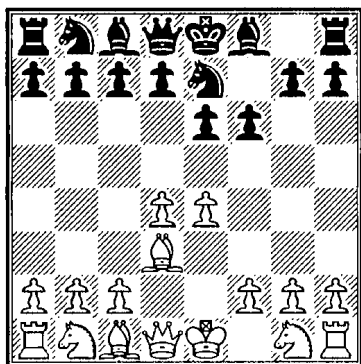
Morphy, P. - Barnes, T.

London, offhand game, July 1858

1.e4 f6

What kind of move is this? Did he touch the wrong pawn? Or could it be that, having experienced the lash of his opponent's skill in open positions, the clever Barnes decided to keep this game as closed as humanly possible? However, the play soon turned far more ordinary than might have been expected from its opening moves.

2.d4 e6 3.♖d3 ♘e7



4.♕e3

The position appears quite absurd. Yet, as it happens, White has no good positional markers to orient himself. He develops pieces as though this was an open position and this doesn't turn out well. White appears to be making natural moves, but wholly without a plan. For example, the bishop's development could have been delayed.

4...d5 5.♘c3 d×e4 5.♘×e4

This looks perfectly natural – the knight

occupies a central square. But in this position, where Black has already weakened his light squares, the bishop capture was much better. After 6.♕×e4!? it would have been more difficult for Black to complete his development. Morphy's play looks strange in this game.

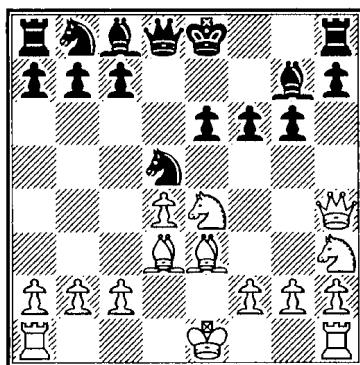
6...♘d5 7.♘h3

The plan with castling long looked stronger and more consistent: 7.♖e2!? ♕e7 8.0-0-0.

7...♕e7 8.♖h5+ g6 9.♖h6

Again, castling long was better: 9.♖e2 0-0 10.0-0-0 and White would have an undisputable advantage. But in those times such methods were little known and not very popular.

9...♕f8 10.♖h4 ♕g7



11.0-0?!

It was not too late to weaken Black's kingside with 11.♕h6 0-0 12.♕×g7 ♖×g7 – and then to castle long, with an obvious advantage.

11...0-0 12.c4?

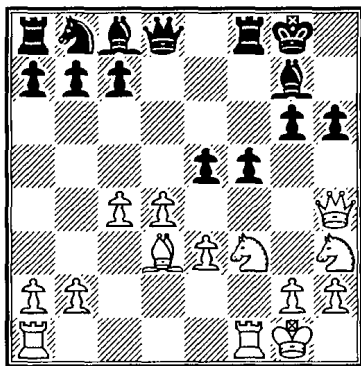
12.♕h6 ♘c6 13.c3 e5 no longer prom-

ises White much, but 12.♙c4! doesn't look bad. The move played hands the advantage to his opponent. This was undoubtedly a bad day for Morphy. First, his opponent made use of a primitive, but psychologically well-founded playing style; then he finds himself in poor form – but it is precisely at such times that a player's shortcomings will surface.

12...♟×e3 13.f×e3 f5 14.♟eg5

Without a single oversight, move by move, White's much better position has been transformed into an inferior one. Here, the endgame after 14.♟×d8 ♜×d8 15.♟c3 c5 would have been clearly in Black's favor.

14...h6 15.♟f3 e5!



Evidently White had been hoping for 15...g5? 16.♟h×g5 h×g5 17.♟×g5 ♜f6 18.♟h7! ♜f8 19.♟g5 which secures the draw.

16.♟×d8?!

This position deserves study from the standpoint that White's advantage in development, which he *formally* possesses, plays virtually no role. While such factors as Black's control of the

dark squares and especially the weakness of White's pawn chain are much more important. Morphy still did not pay much attention to problems of pawn structure, often underestimating their importance. But how was it that he, who invariably sensed the dynamics of a position, missed his only chance to activate his pieces: 16.c5! and after 16...♟×h4 17.♟×h4 e×d4 (17...♟h7 18.e4 with unclear consequences.) 18.♟×g6 ♜e8 19.e×d4 ♟×d4+ 20.♟h1 and White has realistic chances to save the game.

16...♜×d8 17.♟c2?

This is just total surrender; White's last hope was 17.c5. The remaining moves were a mere formality, the fight was already over.

17...e×d4 18.e×d4 ♟×d4+ 19.♟×d4 ♜×d4 20.♜fe1 ♟f7 21.c5 ♟e6 22.♜ad1 ♟c6 23.♜×d4 ♟×d4 24.♟a4 g5 25.♜d1 ♜d8 26.a3 f4 27.♟f2 ♟e2+ 28.♟f1 ♜×d1+ 29.♟×d1 ♟d4 30.♟e1 ♟f6 31.♟d2 ♟b3+ 32.♟×b3 ♟×b3 33.♟g4+ ♟g6 34.g3 h5 35.♟f2 ♟f5 36.♟c3 ♟d5 37.♟d4 c6 38.b4 ♟g2 39.g×f4 ♟×f4 40.a4 ♟f1 41.♟e4 h4 42.♟d2 ♟e2 43.♟e4 g4 44.♟f2 ♟f3 45. ♟e4 ♟f1 46.♟e5 ♟d3 47.♟g5+ ♟g2 48.♟d6 ♟×h2 49.♟c7 ♟g3 50.♟×b7 h3 0-1

Having examined this game, I wondered whether the names of the players were somehow transposed. Could it possibly have been Morphy playing White? It was too weakly played. White played passively and, dare I say it, brainlessly. It's not like him! Yet,

Morphy's play in the next game also contained some inaccuracies.

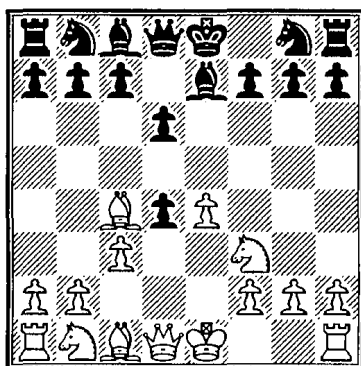
Morphy, P. - Barnes, T.

London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 e×d4 4.♙c4
♙e7

This is frowned on by theory: 4...♘c6 5.c3 ♘e5, as in Glek - Dreev, USSR-ch (U20), Lvov 1985, is considered better.

5.c3



5...d3?

This is just a mistake, 5...♘f6 was better.

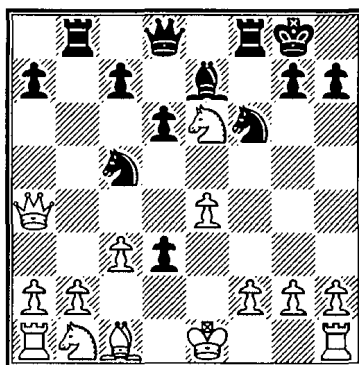
6.♗b3 ♙e6

This leads to simplifications favoring White. Objectively, a stronger course for Black would have been 6...♘c6!? 7.♙f7+ ♖f8 abandoning castling, but keeping the game complex.

7.♙×e6 f×e6 8.♗×b7

Not a bad move, other attractive choices were: 8.♘d4!? ♘d7 9.♘×e6 ♘c5 10.♘×c5 d×c5 11.♗×b7 ♘f6 12.♗b5+ or 8.♗×e6!? both leading to an advantage for White.

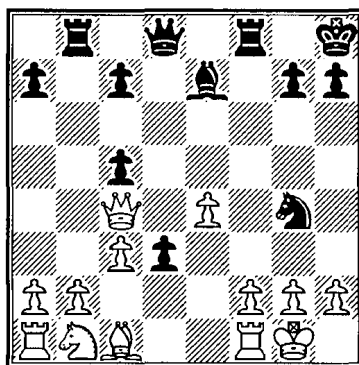
8...♘d7 9.♗b5 ♘gf6 10.♘g5 ♖b8
11.♗a4 0-0 12.♘×e6 ♘c5



13.♘×c5

This does not appear to be the strongest. With White lagging in development, a transition to the endgame seems logical. After 13.♘×d8!? ♘×a4 14.♘c6 ♖be8 15.f3 White would have good chances. Morphy would not usually disdain an advantageous simplification. According to his secretary Frederick Edge, Morphy was still suffering some ill effects from the 12-day ocean voyage to England (Lawson, p. 104). Apparently Morphy was prone to sea-sickness, and required some days to recover fully.

13...d×c5 14.♗c4+ ♖h8 15.0-0
♘g4



16.f4?

But this is just a mistake. The only correct move here was 16.♖e6 with the possible continuation 16...h5 17.♖g6 ♖e8 18.♖xe8 ♜bxe8 19.h3 (19.♖a3? c4! 20.♖xc4 ♖c5 would be bad for White.) 19...♖f6 20.♖d2 with advantage to White.

16...d2?

Black errs in return. After the strongest continuation 16...♖d6! 17.b3 ♖g5 18.g3 ♖h6 19.h4 ♖xh4 20.♖xd3 we get a complex, double-edged position. The moment the game enters a phase of calculating variations, Morphy's superiority over his opponent grows apace.

17.♖xd2 ♜xb2 18.h3 ♜xd2

After 18...♖f6 19.♖c1 ♜b6 20.♖d2 White has both a material and a significant positional advantage.

19.♖xd2 ♖e3 20.♖e2 ♖xf1 21.♜xf1 ♖d7 22.♖c4 ♖b5 23.e5 ♖h4 2.f5

Morphy exploits his advantage energetically and convincingly.

24...♖e7 25.♖g4 ♖d7 26.♜d1!? ♖xf5 27.♖xf5 ♜xf5 28.♜d7 ♖f8 29.e6 1-0

Morphy would weather some difficult times in his next White game as well.

Morphy, P. - Barnes, T.

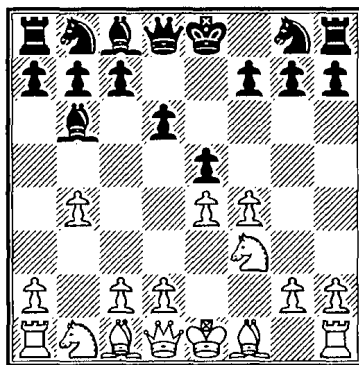
London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♖c5 3.♖f3 d6 4.b4?!

Many moves have been tried here:

4.♖c3 4.♖c4 and 4.c3 – the last has proven to be the most popular. Later, it would be the only move Morphy would employ in this situation.

4...♖b6



5.♖c4?!

Another unfortunate decision by White; yet after 5.♖b2 ♖f6 Black also has an excellent position, as shown in Hector - Smyslov, Malmo 1997: 6.fxe5 dxe5 7.♖xe5 0-0 8.♖c3 ♜e8 9.♖xf6 ♖xf6 and Black went on to win.

5...♖f6 6.♖e2?!

Again, inaccurate! The lesser evil was 6.d3 0-0 7.♖c3 ♖c6 when Black's advantage is smaller.

6...♖c6 7.c3 0-0 8.d3

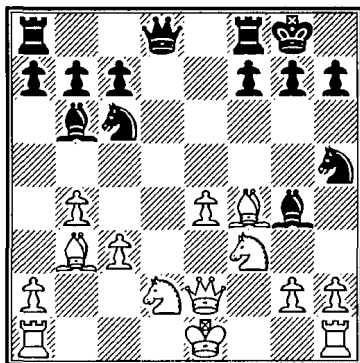
Perhaps he should have played 8.fxe5 ♖xe5 9.♖xe5 dxe5 10.d3 ♖g4 11.g3. Now, Black executes a standard operation for this pawn structure – breaking up the opposing center.

8...exf4 9.♖xf4 d5 10.♖b3 dxe4 11.dxe4 ♖g4

The energetic onslaught of White's pawns has only lead to the creation of

a number of weak squares and pawns in his camp. Morphy, with his enormous understanding of chess dynamics, was still a neophyte concerning static problems. And the experienced European masters would hand him some highly useful lessons; such as the ones he received in this game.

12.♖bd2 ♖h5



This knight sortie was still premature. The simple 12...♙e8 was better, with a long-lasting advantage.

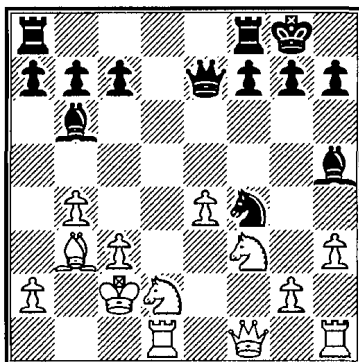
13.♙e3?!

As in the previous game, by avoiding exchanges, Morphy sinks into a very difficult position. The correct line was 13.♙g5 ♜xg5 14.♖xg5 ♙xe2 15.♜xe2 ♖f4+ 16.♜f3 ♖d3 17.♜e2 when Black has a hard time improving his position. Apparently, Morphy was hoping not to draw. The exclamatory part of my note to White's 13th move was given only for courage and fighting spirit; the move's quality was the reason for the question mark.

13...♖e5! 14.0-0-0 ♖d3+ 15.♜c2 ♖hf4 16.♙xf4 ♖xf4

As a result, Black's advantage has expanded to include the two bishops!

17.♜f1 ♜e7 18.h3 ♙h5?



The bishop was useful and should have been retained; the correct way to do this was 18...♙d7!?

19.g4?

This decision deserves a question mark without any qualification. A more modest move was stronger: 19.g3! ♙xf3 (better than 19...♖e6 20.g4 ♙g6 21.♖e5) 20.♜xf3 ♖g6 when Black is left with only a slight advantage.

19...♙g6 20.♜b2 ♙ad8 21.♖d4 ♙xd4 22.♜xf4

White is also in a bad way after 22.cxd4 ♖e6.

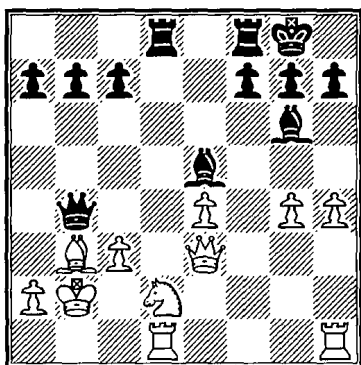
22...♙e5

Obvious, but weaker than 22...♙f6! 23.♙he1 ♙d3 24.e5 ♙g5 25.♜h2 ♙fd8 when Black would have a nearly decisive advantage.

23.♜e3 ♜xb4 24.h4

This is the retribution for imprecise play. From being on the verge of defeat, White has revived, and at once begins to create counterplay. Black will

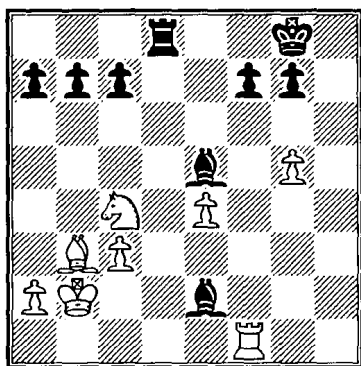
again have difficulties to overcome and commits another error in calculation.



24...h5?

24...♖b5? was also bad because 25.♗c4 h6 26.a4 costs him a piece. But after the correct 24...h6 he would retain a fair-sized advantage. Now, Morphy forcibly seizes the initiative.

25.♗c4 ♖e7 26.♖×d8! ♖×d8 27.g×h5 ♗×h5 28.♖g5! ♖×g5 29.h×g5 ♗f3 30.♖f1 ♗e2



31.♗×e5??

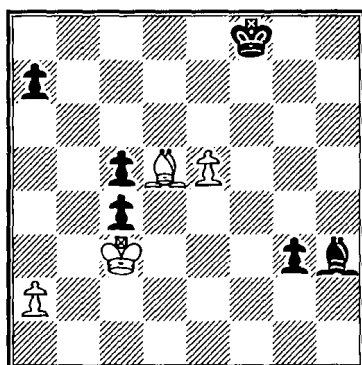
Until now White has avoided danger and played sharply, and with 31.♖f5 ♗g3 32.♗e5 ♗×e5 33.♗×f7+ ♖f8 34.♗b3+ (34.♗c4+ ♗f6! 35.♗×e2 ♖d2+ 36.♖b3 ♖×e2 would be inferior.) 34...♖e7 35.♖×e5+ he could have thrown his opponent on the defensive,

although a draw would still have been the most likely result. Maybe this blunder was because of exhaustion, or in avoiding the draw one last time, Morphy conceived of a "winning" variation and simply overlooked Black's 33rd move. Now it's all over.

31...♗×f1 32.g6 ♖f8 33.g×f7 ♖d6 34.♗f3 ♖f6

34...g5 was also quite sufficient.

35.♗g5 ♖f2+ 36.♖a3 c5 37.♗d5 b5 38.♗h7+ ♖e7 39.f8♖+ ♖×f8 40.♗×f8 ♖×f8 41.e5 g5 42.♗f3 ♗h3 43.c4 b×c4 44.♖b2 g4 45.♗d5 g3 46.♖c3



46...♗e6!

Avoiding an uncomplicated trap: 46...g2? 47.♗×g2 ♗×g2 48.♖×c4 ♖e7 49.♖×c5 ♖e6 50.♖d4 and draws.

47.♗f3 ♖e7 48.a3 ♗d7 49.♗d5 ♗e6 50.♗f3 ♖d7!

Barnes does an excellent job of converting his advantage.

51.♖d2 ♗h3 52.♖e3

52.♖c3 ♖e6 53.♖×c4 ♖×e5 54.♖×c5 ♖f4 55.♗a8 ♖e3 56.♖b5 ♗g4 also loses.

52...♙e6 53.♙e2 c3 0-1

A sad but completely deserved loss. This game revealed a number of vital shortcomings in Morphy's game. Such losses usually bring considerable benefit to anyone wishing to improve. Yet this was not the end of the strange and unexpected lapses in Morphy's game.

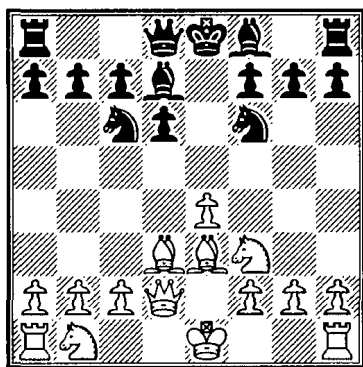
Something similar occurred in the first game of another unofficial match. His opponent, Samuel Boden, then enjoyed quite a high reputation in the chess world.

Boden, S. - Morphy, P.
London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 e×d4
4.♙×d4 ♙d7

Played to avoid the line 4...♗c6 5..♙b5 ♙d7 6..♙xc6 ♙xc6 7.♗c3 with a slight advantage to White.

5.♙e3 ♗c6 6.♙d2 ♗f6 7.♙d3?!



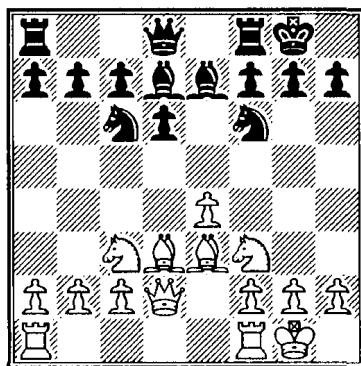
The bishop "bites on granite" here; 7.♗c3 was more accurate.

7...♙e7

Today, we would consider it much more fitting to fianchetto the bishop in this

situation. Morphy often strove for positions and worked with methods that we, from the vantage point of the decades that divide us from his era, would label "Old Indian." Had he continued to work seriously at his chess, he would undoubtedly either have conceived the idea of fianchettoing the king's bishop, or would have "spotted" it in someone else's play and appropriated it for his own use.

8.♗c3 0-0 9.0-0



9...h6?!

Having gotten a cramped position, Morphy does not play to free himself with 9...♗e5 leading to simplification and equalization. Instead, he starts a very suspect plan, from a positional standpoint, which could have resulted in White getting complete control of the central d5-square, further increasing his space advantage.

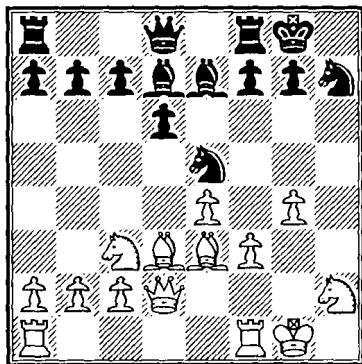
10.h3 ♗h7?! 11.g4?!

White returns the favor, beginning flank operations while the center is still practically wide-open. 11.♗d5 – obvious to anyone from our day – would have brought White a clear advantage.

11...h5

Morphy should have played toward the center in reaction to his opponent's positionally unfounded flank operation: 11...♖e5 12.♙e2 ♘xf3+ 13.♙xf3 ♙g5 14.♙g2 ♙xe3 15.♖xe3 ♙e8 16.♙ad1 ♙c6 and he would have obtained an equal game. But it appears that he had vowed to avoid simplifying and was aiming only to complicate.

12.♙h2 h×g4 13.h×g4 ♖e5 14.f3



As a consequence of White's inaccurate plan, Black could have gotten a good game here with 14...♖xd3 15.♖xd3 ♙f6 16.f4 ♙e8. Instead, Morphy selected the nightmarish:

14...g5?

Until now the players were making dubious positional decisions, but here Morphy crossed the allowable line, fatally weakening his own pawn structure in search of space for his pieces. Certainly in this stage of his chess development, the problems of pawn structure were considerably less important to the activity of his pieces, development, and other elements constituting the dynamic basis of chess. He had a less intuitive feel for the static elements of the game linked to the pawn structure. This is a completely normal phenomenon and occurs frequently. One

player may be born with an innate sense of static elements; another may have its complete opposite. Yet the *size* of one's chess talent has nothing to do with the *structuring* of that talent. Another important element of the aspects we are examining has to do with the development of those God-given capabilities. Each player must be competent in every element of the game, while also, naturally, emphasizing the stronger sides of his own gift. It is precisely here that the role of the *trainer* is invaluable. It is he who must acquaint the student with all the elements of chess play, without exception. It is he who must ensure the progress of his student, and correct those deviations which invariably arise in the course of each player's development.

But in those days each player developed independently. The exceptionally lucky few might be part of a group formed around some famous master, as was Zukertort, who grew into a great master under Anderssen. So Morphy was not just the first real *wunderkind*, but also *the only wunderkind in chess history who was self-taught*. Nevertheless, during the period when Morphy's talent was developing, the absence of a structured training regimen led to that strange deformation in his play which we observe in the present game.

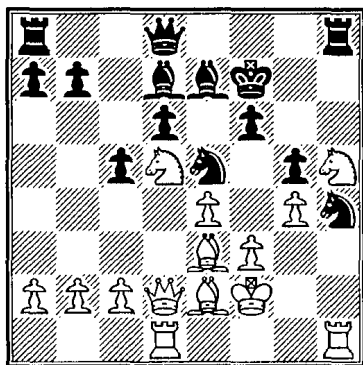
Let's return to our game.

15.♙g2 c5?

Continuing his misguided play and conclusively shattering his own pawn structure.

16.♙h1 ♙g7 17.♖f1 ♙h8 18.♙g3

f6 19. ♖d5 ♗f8 20. ♖h5+ ♔f7
21. ♖ad1 ♗fg6 22. ♕e2 ♖h4+
23. ♖f2

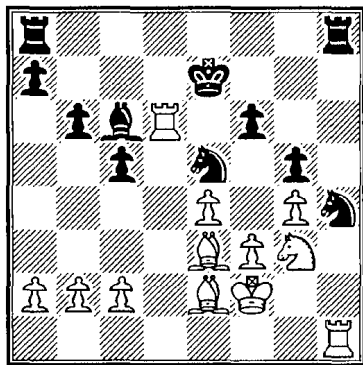


Boden has brought his pieces to bear on Black's weaknesses with simple and logical moves; material losses are now unavoidable.

23... ♕c6 24. ♖xg7 ♖xg7

24... ♖xg7? 25. ♖xg6! was just bad.

25. ♖xg6 ♖b6 26. ♖xg7+ ♔xg7
27. ♖g3 ♖f7 28. ♖d6 ♖e7



29. ♖d2

However great the advantage obtained by Morphy's opponents, sooner or later, the game arrives at a "moment of truth," in which the forces of the two sides come into direct contact. Unavoidably, the time comes when the calculation of

variations dominates the position and Morphy's advantage over other players assumes a larger and larger role. Frequently, he succeeds in avoiding the worst, and sometimes, he can even turn the situation to his own advantage.

This is what happens here. Boden selects a less than convincing plan of operations, and most likely because of a miscalculation of the consequences of the natural 29. ♖hd1. In this line, it arises that Black cannot counter with 29... ♖hxf3 because of 30. ♖xf3 ♖h2+ and now 31. ♖f1! ♖b5+ 32. ♕e2 ♖xe2+ 33. ♖xe2. In the game, White finds it harder to improve his position.

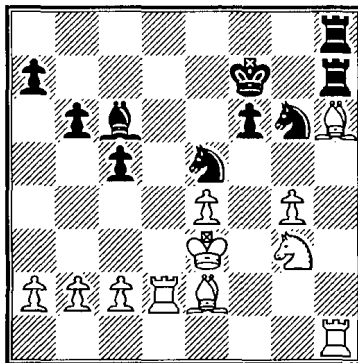
29... ♖f7

Now 30. ♖hd1? would be met with 30... ♖hxf3! 31. ♖xf3 ♖h2+ 32. ♖g2 ♖xg4+ 33. ♖f3 (33. ♖g1 ♖xg2+) 33... ♖e5+ 34. ♖f2 ♖g4+ with a draw. In order to make progress, White must break up his pawn chain, which gives his opponent counterchances.

30. f4 gxf4 31. ♖xf4 ♖hg6
32. ♖h6!

An excellent move; White's whole game hangs upon it.

32... ♖h7 33. ♖e3 ♖ah8



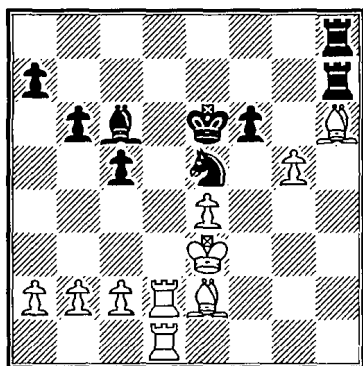
34. ♖f5?!

White loses the thread of the position, eliminating almost everything that remains of his advantage. The correct line was 34.g5! f×g5 35.♖f1+ ♖e6 36.♙×g5 ♖f7 37.♖fd1!? ♖d7 38.♖×d7 ♙×d7 when Black would have had to defend a most unpleasant position.

34... ♖e7 35. ♖×e7 ♖×e7 36.g5 ♖e6

This appears to have been better than 36...f5 37.♖f4 (37.♖hd1 ♙×e4+) 37...♙×e4 when White would now have the strong continuation 38.♖×e5!? with a dangerous initiative.

37. ♖hd1



37...f×g5?

Oh, no! Having defended a difficult position, and with salvation in his grasp, Morphy stumbles at the last moment! 37...♖f7? was also bad: 38.♙c4+ ♖e7 (38...♖e5 39.♙×f7 ♖×f7 40.g6 also loses for Black.) 39.♙×f7 ♖×f7 40.♖f2.

But the strong – and for Morphy, quite elementary – 37...♖×h6! 38.g×h6 ♖×h6 would have left Black with realistic hopes of saving the game. One must

suppose that the reasons for these lapses were psychological. Morphy was uncomfortable in the role of defender, and seeing that a crisis was at hand, lost his concentration prematurely, leaving him quite helpless at that exact moment. Add to that his frail constitution, which no doubt also had a negative influence and we have a typical picture, but an unpleasant one nonetheless. Such shortcomings are very difficult to eradicate!

The game ended momentarily:

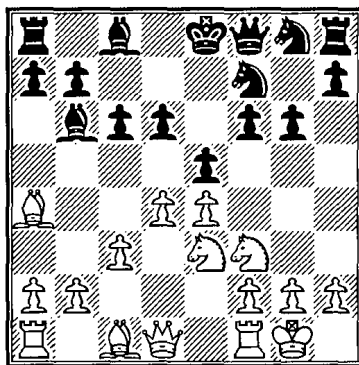
38. ♖d6+ ♖f7 39. ♙h5+ ♖e7 40. ♙×g5+ ♖f8 41. ♖f1+ 1-0

Another game from this match had much in common with those we have just witnessed and we will look at it now.

Morphy, P. - Boden, S.

London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♙b5 ♙c5 4.c3 ♖e7 5.0-0 f6 6.d4 ♙b6 7.♖a3 ♖d8 8.♖c4 ♖f7 9.♖e3 c6 10.♖f5 ♖f8 11.♙a4 g6 12.♖e3 d6



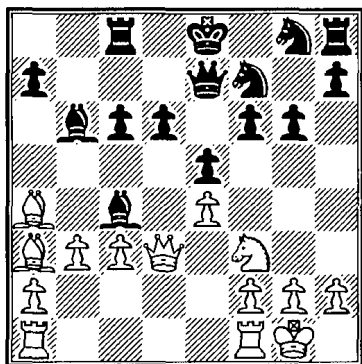
13.d5

Boden played the opening in a highly

dubious style. One must assume that he employed this method of play consciously, following the good experience of Barnes in creating uncomfortably closed positions against Morphy. But this is a subjective viewpoint. Objectively, this position is indisputably in White's favor; Black does not have the slightest compensation for his weakened pawn structure, lagging development, and his coming cramped position.

One good line for White would be to continue his development while seizing more space with 13.b4 ♖d7 14.♗b2 intending to continue c3-c4 later. Black would have had it rough in that case, but Morphy was no fan of such slow maneuverings. He pushed forward at once, following the principle that opening the game favors the better developed side. To a certain extent, he was correct; but the further course of this game shows that his opponent's psychological experiment was justified.

13...♖d7 14.dxc6 bxc6 15.♟c4 ♜c8 16.b3 ♖e6 17.♞d3 ♞e7 18.♙a3 ♙xc4

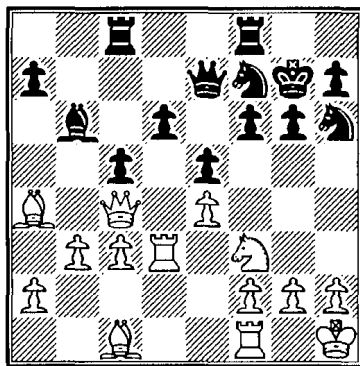


An exchange signifying the most important achievement of Morphy's strategy; now the light squares in Black's camp will be hopelessly weak.

19.♞xc4 ♞f8 20.♞ad1 c5 21.♞d3?

Morphy's plan has borne outstanding results and its logical finale would have been to deploy the minor pieces for the total conquest of the light squares. After 21.♞e1? followed by the knight advance 22.♞c2-e3-d5 White would have achieved a strategically won position. Another very good line was 21.♙b5!? and then 22.♞d3 and 23.♙c4. In that case, too, White would have had a very significant advantage. With proper play Black would have been consigned to utter passivity. Morphy, however, conceived a familiar plan, but one with very little positional basis. As a result of its execution, the enemy forces came to life.

21...♞gh6 22.♞h1?! ♞g7 23.♙c1 ♞hf8



And now:

24.g4?

White could have kept the better chances by playing 24.♞g1 f5 25.♞d2. But now, the advantage passes to Black. Again, it's because of an indisputable underestimation of the value of the pawns and their placement. Morphy's habit of playing open games, where the

activity of the pieces and their cooperation often outweigh the number of pawns, is the cause. In fact, Morphy may have created the world's largest collection of convincing examples of this theme. But when playing positions of a semi-closed or closed nature, he had to learn from his own experience that there are, indeed, other principles in chess. Having beaten his head against a wall in the preceding games, and pursuing the same stubborn course in this one, Morphy finally began to consider the source of his misfortunes.

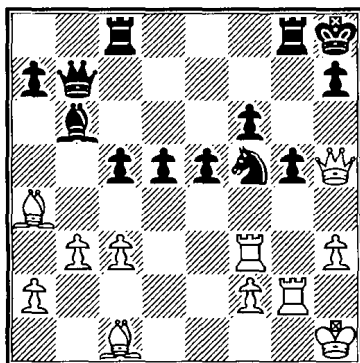
24...♖×g4 25.h3 ♜gh6 26.♖g1 ♜h8 27.♜h4 ♖g8 28.♖dg3 g5

Not the strongest move. The typical Old Indian maneuver 28...f5! looked much stronger.

29.♜f5?

And Morphy immediately lets his opponent off the hook! After 29.♜g2 f5 (29...d5!? would be interesting, too.) 30.♜e3 the position is unclear. But Morphy plans to smash through the ranks of black pawns.

29...♜×f5 30.e×f5 ♜b7+ 31.♖1g2 d5 32.♜g4 ♜h6 33.♜h5 ♜×f5 34.♖f3



Compare this position with the diagram after Black's 23rd move. Black's achievements are colossal; White's position is in ruins. I am particularly struck by the bitter fate of White's light-squared bishop. It's amazing that Morphy, with his natural-born phenomenal sense of harmony in chess, and especially of the coordination of pieces, could go for a position in which he planned to whip up an attack, while having a piece completely shut out of the action.

One might suppose him to be an immensely stubborn person. Then again, it would simply be impossible for a person who is *not* stubborn to achieve any real distinction in chess! Morphy was a chess innovator, comparable even to Steinitz, although he never propagandized his understanding of the principles of chess play, and practically never explained his thinking. Moreover, he was a man who played chess at a serious level for only a very short period. But one can still analyze his thinking in chess – that's what we're doing here!

Morphy's stubbornness on the nature of chess sometimes brought him grief and disappointment. There were times when, attempting to do everything in accordance with his understanding, he acted too straightforwardly, leading to the sort of game we are currently examining. But pioneers always have it rough; unavoidably, they occasionally get "taken down!" Still, Morphy never changed his approach to the game; other than expanding his opening repertoire, enlarging his store of middlegame ideas – his style remained unchanged. Thus he maintained his chess individuality,

playing such chess that had not been played before, and which no one in his era could play, yet his approach to the game was not even accepted until decades later!

34...♘g7

This move is good, but the incisive 34...♘h4!? was better: 35.♙xf6 ♜d4 36.f3 and 36...♙cf8! leads to an easy win. Now, White gives up the exchange to put up stubborn resistance with his bishop pair.

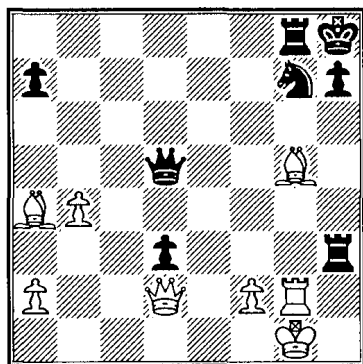
35.♙h6 ♜d8 36.♙xf6 ♜xf6 37.♙xf6 ♜cf8 38.♙xe5 ♜f5 39.♙e3 d4 40.cxd4 ♜f3 41.♙e2

White's position would also be quite joyless after 41.♙xg5 ♜xh3+ 42.♚g1 ♙e4 43.♙e5 ♙c2 44.♙e1 ♜d3.

41...cxd4 42.♜xg5 d3 43.♙d2 ♙d5 44.b4

Finally, the bishop gets into the game!

44...♜gf8 45.♜h6 ♜xh3+ 46.♚g1 ♜g8 47.♜g5

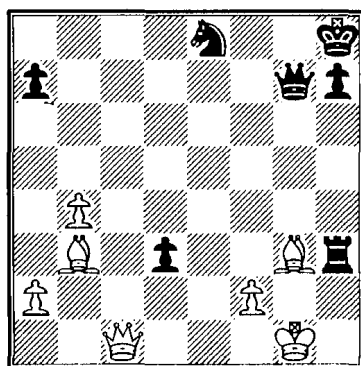


The black queen must be stopped from getting to h5. In a lost position, Morphy fights with all his strength, and his stubbornness will be rewarded.

47...♙d4 48.♙f4 ♙a1+ 49.♙c1 ♙e5?!

It's quite likely that Black could have played more precisely in earlier stages; but now he misses an excellent chance to put the game away: 49...♙xc1+ 50.♜xc1 ♜h4 51.♜b3 ♜c8 52.♜b2 ♜c7 53.♜g3 ♜d7 with a won endgame.

50.♜h6 ♜e8 51.♜xg8+ ♚xg8 52.♜b3+ ♚h8 53.♜f4 ♙g7+ 54.♜g3



54...♜h5?!

This move is quite unfortunate, but it's no longer so easy to demonstrate a convincing win. Thus, upon the tempting 54...♜xg3+ 55.fxg3 ♙xg3+ 56.♚f1 ♙f3+ 57.♚g1, I see no forced win for Black.

55.♙d1

Black loses his pride and joy – the passed pawn.

55...♜e5 56.♙xd3 ♜e1+ 57.♚g2 ½-½

We have just examined several games in which Morphy played poorly. I deliberately presented them together for

three reasons. I wanted to show you some heretofore almost unknown aspects of his chess profile. Presenting them in this way makes it much easier to demonstrate the typical characteristics and principles that help us better orient ourselves in our study of this problem, and because only by seeing the shortcomings of an individual can we fully evaluate his good qualities.

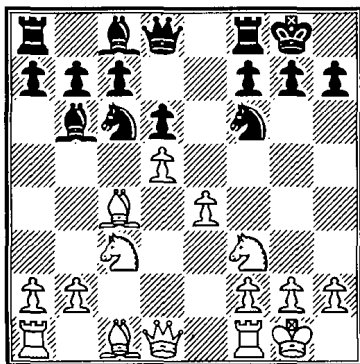
Let us go on to other games of his match with Boden. In the following game, Morphy's favorite methods of play proved very much on point.

Morphy, P. - Boden, S.
London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 exd4
4.♗c4 ♗c5 5.0-0 d6 6.c3 ♘f6?!

This variation is evaluated by theory as being very good for Black because practice has confirmed the strength of the move 6...♗g4!. Then after 7.♖b3 ♗xf3! 8.♗xf7+ ♕f8 9.♗xg8 ♖xg8 10.gxf3 Black has the powerful 10...g5! as in the well-known game Reiner - Steinitz, Vienna 1860.

7.cxd4 ♗b6 8.♘c3 0-0 9.d5?!



The only way to forestall the counterblow 9...♗xe4!

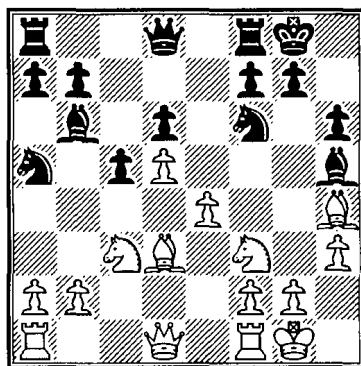
9...♗a5?

An unfortunate choice; 9...♗e5 10.♗xe5 dxe5 was much better, when White would be left with only a slight advantage. But now we reach a position very similar to Evans' Gambit, except that White still has his b-pawn.

10.♗d3 c5

White threatened 11.b4.

11.♗g5! h6 12.♗h4 ♗g4 13.h3
♗h5?!



A typical positional oversight in such situations, similar to the famous game Capablanca - Bogoljubow, BCF Congress, London 1922. 13...♗xf3!? 14.♖xf3 c4 was correct, although after 15.♗c2 ♗d4 16.♖d1! (16.♖ad1 ♗e5 17.♖e3 g5) White has a sizable advantage.

Now Morphy has the opportunity to set his favorite plan in motion.

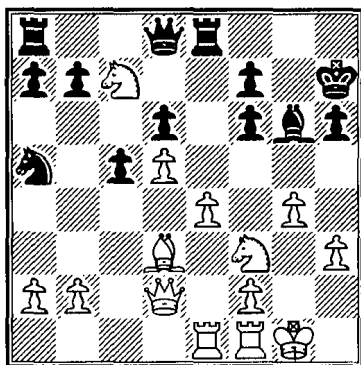
14.g4! ♗g6 15.♖d2 ♖e8 16.♖ae1!
♗c7?!

Yet another unfortunate decision; Black had to cover with 16...a6 17.♖f4 ♗c7 and if 18.a4 then 18...♗b3. As played, White begins a direct attack.

17. ♖b5! ♜h7

After 17... ♖b8 18. b4! cxb4 19. ♗xb4 a6 20. ♘bd4 ♖a7 21. ♙f5 ♖c5 22. ♗b2 Black wouldn't be happy either.

18. ♖xf6 gxf6 19. ♘xc7!



Morphy exchanges first one terribly limited black bishop, then the other; he also repairs his opponent's pawn structure. Why does he do these things and why do I approve of his decision? Because, as a result of this operation, all of Black's minor pieces disappear except for the knight at a5, which can do nothing to hinder White's expansion on the weakened kingside. Behind this decision, there is a simple, but useful principle: If your opponent has a badly posted minor piece, exchanging the other minor pieces increases the importance of this shortcoming. As a good illustration of the effectiveness of this principle, I would recommend looking at the cited Capablanca - Bogoljubow game, especially with Capablanca's commentary.

Morphy's influence on Fischer is widely known; I, for one, never tire of mentioning it. One can also speculate on the influence of Morphy's work on Capablanca. One can certainly discern

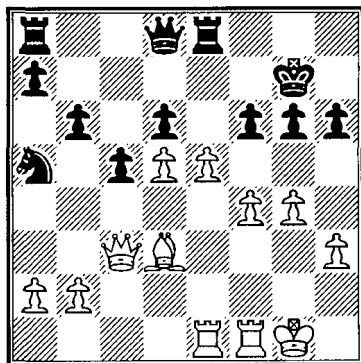
parallels in their views on what constitutes the basis of the game of chess. And first and foremost, the similarity would be the presence in both players of a deep-seated intuition about the coordination of every piece and every element of the position, and a knack for bringing these elements into harmonious unity with one another. They did tend to use different methods to achieve this, but there were more similarities than differences in their approaches. Capablanca tended to resolve problems by positional means; Morphy was more likely to prefer decisive attacks.

Capablanca keenly felt this "kinship of spirit" and his characterization of Morphy's play, as quoted by Kasparov on page 43 of *Garry Kasparov on My Great Predecessors, Part I*, is typical of himself in its simultaneous clarity and depth: "Morphy... did not look for complicated combinations; but he also did not avoid them, which really is the correct way of playing... His main strength lay not in his combinative gift, but in his positional play and general style. Morphy gained most of his wins by playing directly and simply, and it is this simple and logical method that constitutes the true brilliance of his play..."

In the next passage Kasparov also notes that "Morphy's strength, according to Alekhine, was his 'deeply considered positional play, primarily of an aggressive character.'" It is amazing how much alike the opinions were of those irreconcilable foes and chess antagonists: Capablanca and Alekhine!

19... ♗xc7 20. ♗c3 ♗d8 21. ♘h4 b6 22. f4 ♜g7 23. ♘xg6! f×g6

24.e5!



Having, for all practical purposes, an extra piece on the kingside, White does not hesitate with a breakthrough.

24...♖c8 25.♙b1 ♜f7

25...d×e5 loses at once to 26.f×e5 ♜×d5 27.e×f6+ ♜h7 28.♙×g6+ ♜×g6 29.♜c2+.

26.e6+ ♜g7 27.♜d3 f5!

By surrendering material, Black avoids an immediate catastrophe.

28.g×f5 ♜f6 29.f×g6 ♜×b2

29...♖e7!? offered sterner resistance, but Black could not have held off all the threats as White would have played 30.f5 ♖f8 31.b3 ♖b7 32.a3 ♖d8 33.b4 opening a second front on the queenside.

30.f5 ♜f6

Matters also end quickly after 30...c4 31.f6+ ♜×f6 32.♙×f6 c×d3 33.♙f7+ ♜g8 34.♙×d3.

31.e7! c4 32.♜g3 c3 33.♙e6 ♜d4+ 34.♜f2 ♜×d5 35.f6+ 1-0

The next game was outstanding in quality and a typical “Morphy-style” production.

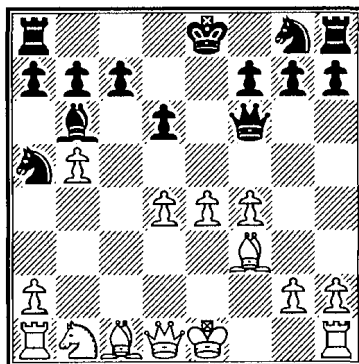
Morphy, P. - Boden, S.

London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♙c5 3.♞f3 d6 4.c3

As we have noted, this move is the most popular continuation. It has been used by Anderssen, Steinitz, Lasker, Rubinstein, and Capablanca!

4...♙g4 5.♙e2 ♞c6 6.b4 ♙b6 7.b5 ♞a5 8.d4 ♙×f3 9.♙×f3 e×d4 10.c×d4 ♜f6



11.♙c3!?

11.e5 ♜e6 12.♞c3 ♞e7 leads to an unclear position that looks a bit more promising for White. Apparently, it was what Boden had in mind when he took the knight at f3. However, he failed to note with what enthusiasm Morphy sacrificed pawns to seize the initiative. I cannot say with absolute certainty that White’s last move was his objective best. To give it the proper evaluation, it is critical to consider the position that could have occurred after Black’s 15th.

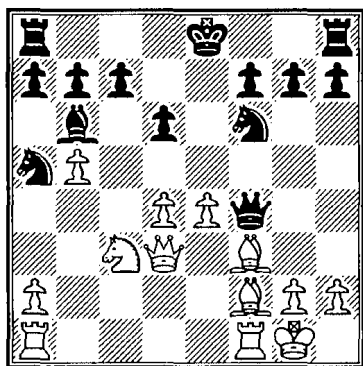
11...♞c4 12.♙f2 ♜×f4 13.0-0 ♞f6

An important moment in this game; it would seem as though Black would have been better off playing 13...♖e3. White would reply 14.♗c1 (but not 14.♗d2?? ♗xh2+!) 14...♙d4 and now 15.♙a3!, which is much stronger than the line with 15.♙c3 ♗e5 examined in Maróczy's book. Now Black has a hard time coming up with anything better than 15...♗h6 16.♞e1 ♙xg2 (16...♙e5 17.h3 ♙xg2 changes nothing.) 17.♙xg2 ♙xh3 18.♗xh3 when White's two minor pieces will be much more important in the middlegame than Black's rook and pawns.

14.♗d3 ♙a5

After 14...d5 15.exd5 ♙d6 16.♞e1+ White has the initiative as well as material equality.

15.♙c3



15...0-0?!

Instead of the text 15...♙g4 16.♙xg4 ♗xg4 17.♙d5 0-0 would have been stronger, after 18.♙g3 White would have no more than rough compensation for the pawn. But now his advantage grows.

16.g3!? ♗h6 17.♗g2

White's 16th and 17th moves also deserve concentrated attention. Let's recap what has happened. White gave up a pawn in the opening, obtaining only a small lead in development in return. However, he also has a great deal more mobility and coordination for his pieces. Meanwhile, Black's position looks solid enough, with no clearly defined weaknesses; taking it by direct attack at this point does not seem feasible. Black likely has in mind the above-mentioned simplification of the position. Meanwhile White, with no concrete threats at the moment, just makes a pair of moves that strengthen his position. In those days, the sacrifice of material for *non-concrete ends* (such as long-term activity) was not understood and no one played chess like that for many years afterwards, either. Recalling similar examples of this kind of play, one can only bring to mind a few games of Emanuel Lasker, and those were only in cases where he had to make the best of bad situations. Later on, the first person to play this way was Alekhine! Later still, Spassky played outstanding games of this sort, and today, of course, there is Kasparov.

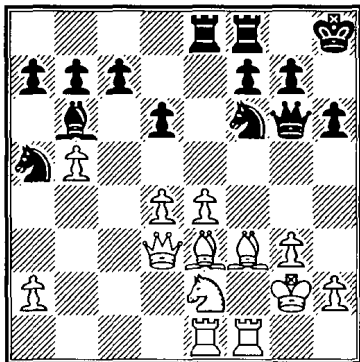
This was not an isolated episode for Morphy, for whom this sort of approach to the game was normal. So, by how many decades did this man outstrip his contemporaries!?

17...♞ae8 18.♞ae1 ♗h8 19.♙e3?!

Only here and on the 21st move can one berate White – and for the same reason. He selects an inaccurate order of moves, overlooking Black's excellent defensive chance. Thus, he should have executed the same plan, but beginning

with 19.♖e2!. If 19...d5 then White has 20.e5.

19...♙g6 20.♖e2 h6



Of course 20...♖xe4? is bad as 21.♖f4 ♙f5 22.g4 wins a piece. But 20...♗xe4! 21.♖f4 ♗xf4 22.♙xg6 hxg6 23.♗xf4 ♗xd4 24.♗e7 looks very good, after which White would have only a slight advantage.

21.♗d2?!

Again, Morphy surprisingly overlooks an important defensive resource for his opponent. The correct way was to begin with 21.♖f4 ♙h7 first, and only then 22.♗d2.

21...d5?

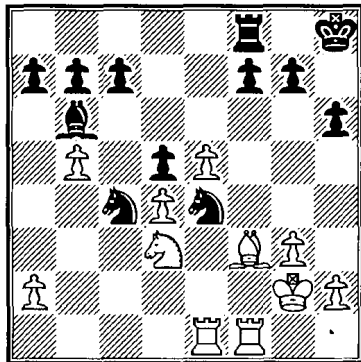
Practically the decisive error; White would have had a strong initiative after 21...c6 22.♖f4 ♙h7 23.♗b4; but once again, the correct line was 21...♗xe4! 22.♖f4 ♗xf4 23.♙xg6 fxg6 24.♗xf4 ♗xd4 25.♗e7 g5 leading to a completely unclear position.

22.♖f4 ♙h7 23.e5 ♙xd3
24.♖xd3 ♖c4

White has a considerable advantage

after 24...♖e4 25.♗b4 ♗g8 26.♗xe4 dxe4 27.♗xe4.

25.♗b4 ♖e4 26.♗xf8 ♗xf8

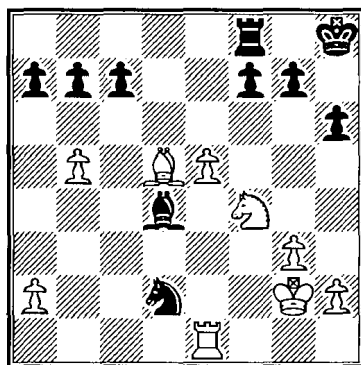


In this seemingly unclear position, Morphy finds an elegant and convincing forced win.

27.♖f4! ♖ed2

27...♖cd2 28.♗xe4 ♖xf1 29.♗xd5 also leads to a loss.

28.♗xd5! ♖xf1 29.♗xc4 ♖d2
30.♗d5 ♗xd4



31.e6!

This was the blow Morphy foresaw when he started the combination on move 27.

31...g5 32.e7 ♗e8 33.♗xf7 gxf4

34.gxf4 ♖xe7 35.♖xe7 1-0

The two contests we have just examined were what we nowadays would refer to as “exhibition” games. However, these games were quite important in establishing Morphy’s early reputation.. It was obvious that there was now a “beetle in the ant-hill,” so to speak: a provocatively young and talented player, even more so an American, who could not help but draw heightened interest to these matches.

Morphy beat two experienced players of good repute; indeed, Boden was very highly regarded in the chess world of that time. But what can we say about these results, knowing the future course of events?

First of all, that Morphy did not win easily – not at all. Both of his opponents outplayed him several times. And Paulsen, someone who was to play a much weightier role in the history of chess, was only able to win one game from Morphy. I have tried to present the most significant games of these matches, upon which one might confidently draw conclusions about the character of the struggle, of the accomplishments and the shortcomings of his opponents. In examining them, one may confidently say that in both cases, Morphy’s opponents succeeded in locating his weak spots, and striking at them effectively. Had it not been for Morphy’s obvious superiority in the calculation of variations, the scores of both matches might have ended up roughly even.

What shortcomings appeared in the play of the young American? First, a

rather limited openings repertoire, but this is something quite correctable, and in those days, it was not very serious; second, and much more important, a very limited arsenal of positional techniques; and third, his poor understanding, or underestimation, of the problems of pawn chains, and the aspects connected with them, came into sharp relief. Morphy acted uncertainly when playing positions in which static long-term factors had a weightier role. What had obviously happened was that, playing in America against opponents of middling skill, with their one-sided and frequently old-fashioned opening proclivities, he had no opportunities to touch up his strategic weaponry – mostly, he had no need of it, and there was no one to learn it from in a practical setting.

As far as books and magazines were concerned, since Morphy had been attracted from his youth to active, spectacular, blow-for-blow games, and such play was quite popular, especially in connection with the victories of Adolf Anderssen, it was this kind of game that he apparently concentrated on when working with the literature. And there was no one to balance his studies; thus, our untrained and under-practiced *wunderkind* gained valuable experience from these contests.

And we should add to this one further observation. It is known that Morphy didn’t just go to Europe “to walk, to see, to show himself” (to use Pushkin’s expression), but with a concrete goal: to play against Staunton, who for a considerable length of time had been the number one player in the world, and whose manner of play Morphy found

quite distasteful. This attitude was insufficiently objective, and to a great extent proceeded precisely from Morphy's lack of chess education.

So, to conclude: these first games against strong British masters brought him inestimable benefit. He saw and experienced for himself, that chess was much broader than he had supposed. These matches were even more useful to Morphy in the light of his coming great battles – that is, his matches with Löwenthal, Harrwitz, and Anderssen. Had Morphy immediately met with Staunton, when the latter was more experienced, quite strong, and in his best years; the outcome could have been unpleasant. Staunton was an expert at snuffing the aggressive tries of his opponents, and forcing his own “crawling” method of play upon them.

Naturally, for someone not as phenomenally gifted as Morphy, overcoming such a significant shortfall in certain aspects of chess would have been practically impossible. But such are the gifts of fortune. Morphy was able to make considerable improvements in his weak points in a short period of time.

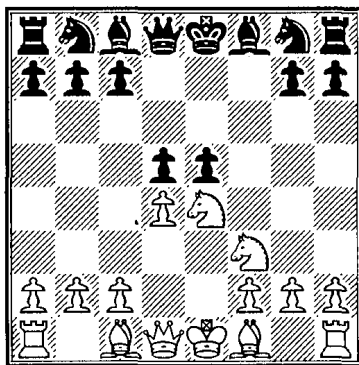
After these first two “exhibition” contests, Morphy played two more: against G. Medley and H. Bird. They are of lesser interest for our research, so we will examine just one game. It is famous for the amazing, spectacular and original decision made by Morphy. It has been commented upon many times, but Kasparov's analyses in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on pages 37-39, can hardly be improved. So I will construct my notes in accordance with his.

Bird, H. - Morphy, P.
London, offhand game, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 f5

Morphy loved this variation for Black, but later it was demonstrated that White has several ways of obtaining a great advantage with proper play. So objectively, Black's last is a bad move.

4.♘c3 f×e4 5.♘×e4 d5



6.♘g3?!

Zukertort would later show that after 6.♘×e5 d×e4 7.♖h5+ g6 8.♘×g6 ♘f6 9.♖e5+ White gets a great advantage.

6...e4 7.♘e5 ♘f6 8.♙g5

White should break up the enemy center; after 8.f3! exf3 9.♖×f3 ♙d6 he has a small advantage.

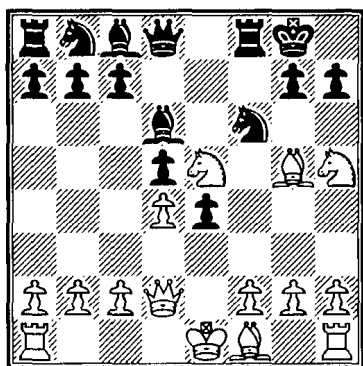
8...♙d6 9.♘h5?!

An ill-fated knight! Its last two moves were both unfortunate. Again, 9.f3!? was correct.

9...0-0 10.♖d2?!

Another inaccuracy; he should have

continued his development with 10.♖e2. The position after 10.♜d2 is useful to evaluate.



Without completing his development, White throws himself into the creation of threats against the black king's completely sound position. The king has more than enough defenders. Thus, White's aggressive play in this position is positionally unfounded. And no amount of fighting spirit can compensate for such a mistaken strategy. This demonstrates the difference between intuition and understanding the laws of play, which to a great extent had not even been formulated in that time.

I am speaking here of something Morphy certainly knew: successful attacks are possible only when: a) one has a target for attack – that is, weak (insufficiently defended) spots in the enemy camp; b) the attacker has a sufficient amount of force on hand – as a rule, enough to overcome the enemy's in the critical sector of the board; and: c) the attacking forces are capable of cooperating well, and in this respect, they would also be superior to the enemy forces.

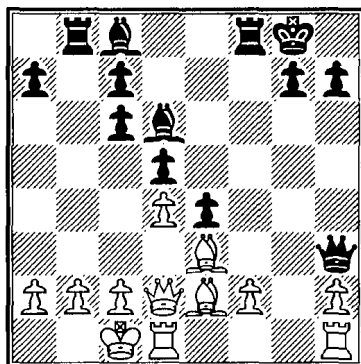
That Morphy understood this essence of chess, along with the principles of

chess dynamics is shown and demonstrated by his games. Returning from these considerations to the immediate course of the game, White's unjustified activity must be met with an opposing counterblow.

10...♜e8! 11.g4?

This is, of course, an error, but as Kasparov shows 11.♖xf6+? gxf6 12.♖xf6 is refuted by 12...e3! 13.♜xe3 ♜xf6 14.♜g5+ ♜g6. Best is 11.♖xf6 ♜xh5 12.♖g5 when Black has only a small advantage.

11...♖xg4 12.♖xg4 ♜xh5 13.♖e5 ♖c6 14.♖e2 ♜h3 15.♖xc6 bxc6 16.♖e3 ♜b8 17.0-0-0



Now, we have reached one of the best-known positions in the entire Morphy legacy. The position is won for Black, who has an extra pawn and a great positional advantage. So it is only interesting because of Black's next move. Evaluating this decision from a purely chess standpoint, Black's choice deserves either no annotation, or perhaps even the "?!". Kasparov gave it. The reason is that, if you look at the elementary, yet very strong continuation 17...♖g4! trading off White's only valuable piece, leaving the remainder a

matter of technique – the comparison is not at all in favor of the text move. But that's only if you look at both continuations objectively, without considering any other factors. And it is precisely those "other factors" that interest us, inasmuch as we are trying to penetrate the details of Paul Morphy's chess profile.

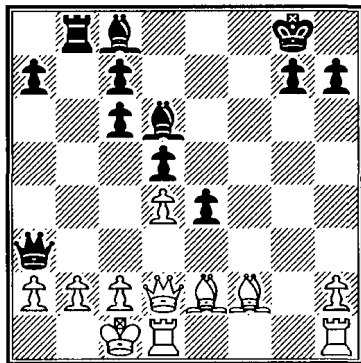
For example, we ought to take into account that this game had no particular sporting significance. Thus, seeing a possibility which, although not clear to the end, was nonetheless quite spectacular, Morphy would head straight for it. In those days, the esthetic sense played a much greater role and for a player blessed with a sense of fantasy, which nobody could deny Morphy had, he chose the continuation that set his opponent the most difficult problems.

Also, Black was never, at any point, risking more than a draw; from all this it follows that we should evaluate his ideas in a different light. For Morphy, there were other values, and on that scale of values we posit: a) the excellent fantasy displayed by Black in his approach to this position – how many would have looked in the same direction as Morphy directed his gaze? – b) Black's wonderfully spectacular next move; and: c) the total satisfaction that many generations of chess fans have received. Then I must allow myself to give this move a different mark.

17...♖xf2! 18.♙xf2 ♖a3!!

Nobody disputes the evaluation of this move. The alternative 18...♙a3 leads to the following variations: 19.♖e3 ♖xb2 (19...♖xe3+ 20.♙xe3 ♖xb2

21.♙f4 ♖xa2+ 22.♖d2 ♙b4+ 23.♖e3 ♖xc2 24.♙xc7 is also to White's advantage.) 20.♖xh3 ♙xh3 21.♖d2 ♙b4+ 22.♖e3 ♖xc2 23.♙g3 and White's advantage gives him decent chances to win.



19.c3!

This move is forced. 19.♖g5? would lose to 19...♖xb2! (Taking this way is stronger than taking with the queen.) 20.♖d8+ ♙f8 21.♖d2 (21.♖xc8 ♖b3+ 22.♖d2 ♖b4+ 23.♖c1 ♖b1*) 21...e3+! 22.♖e1 ♖c3+ and Black wins with a mating attack.

19...♖xa2 20.b4

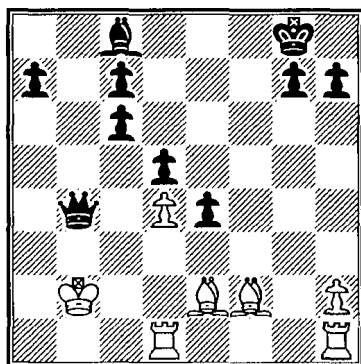
Again forced: 20.♖c2 ♙f4+ 21.♖d2 e3 would lose rapidly.

20...♖a1+ 21.♖c2 ♖a4+ 22.♖b2?

A surprising and mistaken choice; after the natural 22.♖c1 Kasparov's excellent analysis shows that Black retains a "minimal advantage" with 22...♙f5 23.♙e1! (Stronger than 23.♖e3 ♖a2 24.♖hg1 a5 25.♖d2 ♖a1+ 26.♖c2 ♖a4+ 27.♖b1 axb4 28.♖b2 b3 when Black still has threats – VB.) 23...♖a1+ 24.♖c2 e3+ 25.♖b3 exd2 26.♖xa1 ♖e8! 27.♙a6 dxe1!

28. ♖a×e1 ♖×e1 29. ♖×e1 ♙×h2
30. ♙b7 ♙e4 31. ♙×c6 ♜f7.

22... ♙×b4 23. c×b4 ♖×b4+
24. ♜×b4 ♜×b4+



25. ♜c2

After 25. ♜a2 Kasparov demonstrates a series of spectacular breaks: 25...c5! 26. d×c5 e3! 27. ♙×e3 d4 (Kasparov) 28. ♖×d4 ♙e6+.

25...e3! 26. ♙×e3

26. ♙e1 ♙f5+ 27. ♙d3 ♜a4+! 28. ♜c1 ♙×d3 29. ♖×d3 ♜a1+ 30. ♜c2 ♜a2+ 31. ♜c1 ♜g2 also loses for White.

26... ♙f5+ 27. ♖d3 ♜c4+ 28. ♜d2 ♜a2+ 29. ♜d1 ♜b1+ 0-1

Let me add a few more words on the subject of Morphy's decision at move 17. He undoubtedly understood the strength of the positional alternative to his combination, and he surely would have won had he proceeded in that direction. But his unlimited faith in the power of his dynamic approach to the game had a role to play. For Morphy, this faith flowed directly from his innermost self and his successes gave continual reinforcement to his native

conviction. In such a situation, how could he believe otherwise!

Prior to his match with Bird, Morphy partnered with Barnes in two consultation games against Staunton and Owen. This tandem worked out well because Barnes knew Staunton's tastes and playing style and provided useful assistance for Morphy.

Morphy & Barnes - Staunton & Owen
Consultation Match, London, June 1858

1. e4 d5 2. e×d5 ♜×d5 3. ♙c3 ♜d8
4. d4 ♙f6 5. ♙d3 ♙c6?!

5... ♙g4 was stronger.

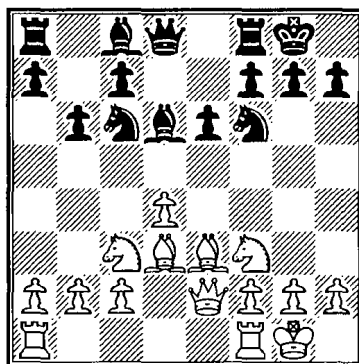
6. ♙e3 e6

Again, 5... ♙g4 was better.

7. ♙f3 ♙d6?!

The bishop is better placed on e7, giving greater protection to the king.

8. 0-0 0-0 9. ♜e2 b6

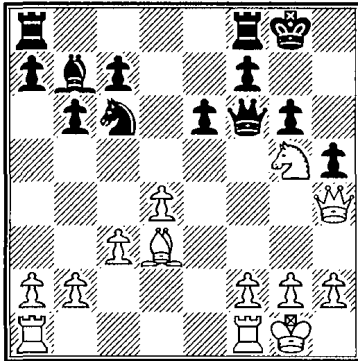


Exploiting his opponents' inaccuracies, White executes a maneuver that leads to positions where he will have a long-lasting advantage.

10. ♖g5!? ♖b7 11. ♘e4 ♖e7
 12. ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 13. ♗e4 g6
 14. ♗h4 ♖xg5

Black had an unpleasant choice to make. On 14... ♗g7 15. ♗h6+ ♗g8 16. ♖e4 ♖b8 17. ♖ad1 White exerts strong pressure. The best move might have been 14... ♖e7, although Black would have a passive position.

15. ♘xg5 h5 16. c3 ♗f6



After 16...e5 17. ♗g3 ♗d6 (17...exd4 18. ♘e6 is bad) there follows 18. ♘e4 ♗e7 19. d5 ♖b8 20. f4 when White has a strong initiative.

17. ♖ae1

This placement of the rooks is typical of Morphy and in this position it is a complete success.

17... ♘e7

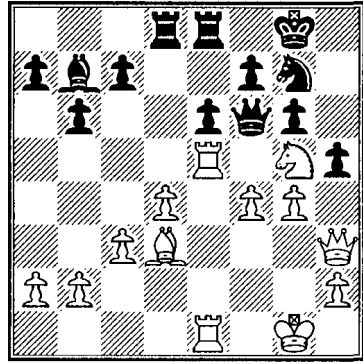
17...e5? is met by 18. f4! exd4 19. f5 with a decisive attack.

18. f4 ♘f5 19. ♗h3 ♖fe8 20. ♖e5 ♖ad8 21. ♖fe1 ♘g7

A "normal" course of development might proceed: 22. ♗e3 ♘f5 23. ♖xf5

gxf5 24. ♗f2 ♗h6 25. ♖5e3 when White's advantage would be indisputable. Instead, Morphy took a most unexpected decision.

22. g4!?



Destroying his pawn chain and unreasonably sharpening the situation. We could only speculate about the motive behind such a decision, especially taking into account that Morphy had a definite interest in the outcome of this game. The most important goal of his visit to Europe was to meet Staunton over the board and "remove his crown." Ultimately of course Staunton avoided a match, leaving these two consultation games as their only known over-the-board encounters.

Morphy's decision would seem insufficiently grounded on general positional principles. Hence, the unusual mark I gave this move. But White's decision was based upon accurate calculation, powerful intuition, excellent imagination, and a fresh approach to the game unmarked by routine. In our day, I would be hard put to imagine a strong player who would seriously consider such a move and that is the reason I give it two exclamation marks.

22...c5

On 22...h×g4 White would have needed to foresee some rather difficult lines: 23.♖h6! and now: a) 23...♗×f4 loses to 24.♙×g6!; b) White also obtains a clear advantage after: 23...♙h5 24.f5! ♖g7 (24...♙f4 loses to 25.f×g6 f×g6 26.♖f1 ♙f3 27.♙×f3) 25.♙×f7! ♗×h6 26.♙×h6+ ♖g7 27.♙f7! ♙f4! 28.♙×d8 ♖×d8 29.f6+! ♖×f6 30.♙e4; c) and the same goes for: 23...c5 24.f5!

23.♙e4 ♙a6

A complex game of calculation ensues after 23...♙×e4 24.♙×e4 ♗×f4 (24...♗e7 25.g5 ♖h8 26.d×c5 was likely the correct line for Black, but White has the advantage), leading to a complicated position: 25.g×h5! c×d4 (25...g×h5 is bad: 26.♖f1 ♖g4+ 27.♗×g4 h×g4 28.♙f6+ wins; and White also keeps a big advantage after 25...♙×h5 26.♖f1 ♗h6 27.♙f6+) 26.h×g6! ♗×e5 27.♗h7+ ♖f8 28.g×f7 and Black would have to find 28...♙f5! 29.f×e8♗+ ♖×e8 although White still keeps the advantage after 30.♗×a7.

24.g×h5 ♙×h5 25.♙f3 c×d4

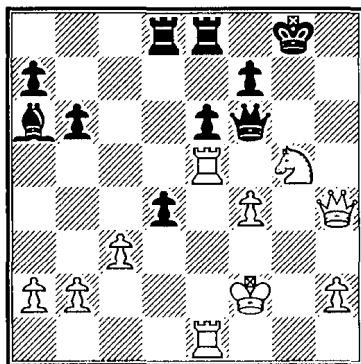
25...♙×f4 would force White to find some intricate maneuvers: 26.♗h7+ ♖f8 27.♙c6 c×d4 (White has a forced – but again, not simple – win after 27...♙d3 28.♖f1 ♙f4 29.♗h6+ ♖e7 30.♙×e6!! ♖h8 31.♗×f4 ♗×f4 32.♙×d8+! ♗×e5 33.♖×f7+ ♖×d8 34.d×e5) 28.♗h6+ ♖e7 29.♙×e8 ♖×e8 30.♙h7 ♗h8 31.♗×f4 when White has a considerable advantage.

26.♙×h5 g×h5 27.♗×h5 ♗g7 28.♖f2 ♗f6

Black would lose after 28...d×c3

29.♙e4 f6 30.♖g1 ♗×g1+ 31.♖×g1 f×e5 32.♙f6+ ♖f8 33.f×e5.

29.♗h4?!



Morphy, as we have seen before, errs at the end and spoils the wonderful impression created by his handiwork. White had an effective and spectacular winning line: 29.♙f7! ♗×f4+ 30.♖g1 ♗×f7 (30...♖b8 31.♖g5+ ♖f8 32.♗h6+) 31.♖g5+ ♖f8 32.♗h6+ ♖e7 33.♖g7 ♖g8 34.♗×e6+.

If White's goal was to stop the check at f4, he still chose the wrong move. Stronger was 29.♗g4! ♗g6 (29...♗g7 would have been better, although White retains an advantage after 30.♖g1 d×c3 31.♙×e6 ♖d2+ 32.♖e1 ♗g6 33.b×c3) 30.f5 ♗g7 and now 31.♗f4! gives White a decisive advantage.

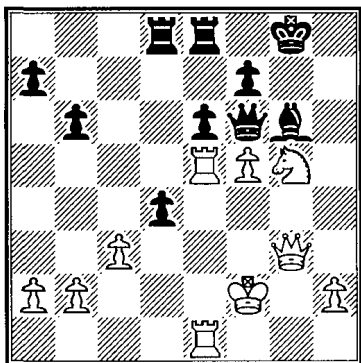
29...♙d3 30.♗g3!

It's possible that White saw all this when making his 29th move.

30...♙g6?!

Black walks right into the trap! Had he only found 30...♗g6! 31.c×d4 ♖×d4 White would have only had the better position after 32.♖g1. Now, however, the idea works:

31.f5!



31...♙xf5

Pin upon pin; Black has no time to retreat the king: 31...♖f8 32.♗e4. And 31...dxc3 32.♗e4 ♞d2+ 33.♖g1 is also bad.

32.♗e4+ ♜g6 33.♗f6+ ♖f8
34.♖xg6 ♙xg6 35.♗xe8 ♜xe8

White keeps the advantage after 35...dxc3 36.bxc3; but this is what Black should have played. Holding onto the passed pawn favors White, since this pawn will be blockaded; while White's queenside pawn chain eventually decides the game.

36.h4 d3 37.♖e3 ♜e7 38.♖d2
♞d6 39.♞g5 ♖f6 40.♞f1+ ♙f5
41.♞g8 ♞d5 42.h5 ♞e5 43.♞f2
♞e4 44.♞h2 ♙h7 45.♞h8 ♜g7
46.♞a8 ♖h6

White also wins after 46...♞a4 47.h6+ ♜g6 48.♞h8.

47.♞x a7 ♞f4 48.♞b7 e5 49.♞xb6+
f6 50.a4 e4 51.♞e6 ♞f3 52.a5 1-0

This game is not as well known as many of Morphy's games, but I like it very

much – and the main reason is the move 22.g4. Mostly because there is a lot of non-standard stuff hidden behind it. I feel no compunction about assigning Morphy authorship of this move and those who remember the playing style of his partner will unhesitatingly agree. Above all, this move signifies Morphy's striving to resolve the problems of the position dynamically. Yet wanting something and knowing how to get it done are two different things.

The primary value of this game is that Morphy, upon seeing an original and ostensibly dubious approach, was capable of foreseeing its promise. Exact calculation of all its complexities could hardly have been possible; thus, intuition played a major role in making the decision. The power of Morphy's intuition in positions where the dynamic element predominates worked wonders. Often, these would be muddled positions where it is very difficult to make a decision based solely upon calculation.

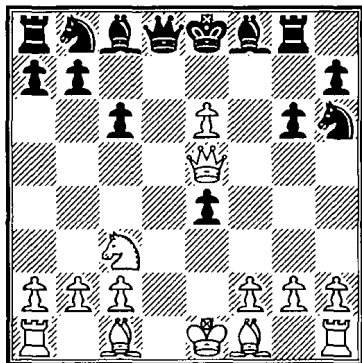
Here arises the principal difference between the play of Morphy and that of Fischer. Fischer was unbelievably strong in strategically clear positions that he could accurately calculate, but he was less secure in strategically complex positions that relied more on intuition.

Now, let's look at the second game.

Staunton & Owen - Morphy & Barnes
Consultation Match, London, June 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 f5 4.dxe5
fxe4 5.♗g5 d5 6.e6 ♗h6 7.♗c3
c6 8.♗gxe4 dxe4 9.♖h5+ g6

10. ♖e5 ♜g8



11. ♕xh6

The variation selected by White leads to a sharp game in which it's important to be the player who's better prepared. In those days, however, players gained satisfaction from the creative process over the board and from the chance to enter a world of adventure.

General opinion holds that this variation must eventually favor White, but I have not unearthed any convincing analyses. I can't confirm whether 11. ♕xh6 is any better or worse than 11. ♕g5, which is recommended by most commentators. Therefore, I will present a short analysis, done with the assistance of *Fritz 8*, which will give you an idea of how the game could develop.

11. ♕g5 ♜g7 12. e7 and now it would be risky for Black to try 12... ♖b6 because of 13. 0-0-0 ♕d7 (13... ♕xe5 14. ♜d8+ ♖f7 15. ♕c4+ ♕e6 16. ♕xe6+ ♖xe6 17. ♜xg8+- is also bad for Black) 14. ♖xe4 ♕xc3 15. bxc3 ♜f7 16. ♕c4 when White has a dangerous initiative. A much safer looking line is 12... ♖d5!? 13. ♖xd5 ♕xc3+ 14. bxc3 cxd5 as in the game Wells - Henris, Antwerp 1995, with only a small advantage for White.

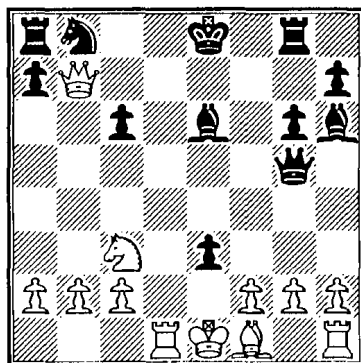
11... ♕xh6 12. ♜d1 ♖g5

Morphy seeks active play at the first opportunity, but the game continuation shows that it might not have been best. 12... ♖e7 is the passive alternative, when a possible continuation might be 13. ♕c4 ♜g7 14. ♖xe4 ♕xc3+ 15. bxc3 b5 16. ♕b3 and White has compensation for the material.

13. ♖c7 ♕xe6 14. ♖xb7

14. ♜xe4 ♖e7 15. ♜d8+ ♖xd8 16. ♜d6+ ♖xd6 17. ♖xd6 leads to a clear advantage for Black after 17... ♜g7 18. ♕c2 ♖e7 19. 0-0 ♕f8, so White's move was correct.

14... e3



This counterattack was the point behind Black's sacrifice on move twelve.

15. f3!

For the time being, Staunton and his companion are playing impeccably. Maróczy's suggestion 15. fxe3 ♖xe3+ 16. ♕e2 ♖b6 17. ♖xh7 (17. ♖xa8 ♖e7 18. ♕f3 ♜c8 19. ♜a4 ♖c7 20. ♖f2 ♜a6 gives Black the better chances) 17... ♕f8 would leave Black with a great advantage.

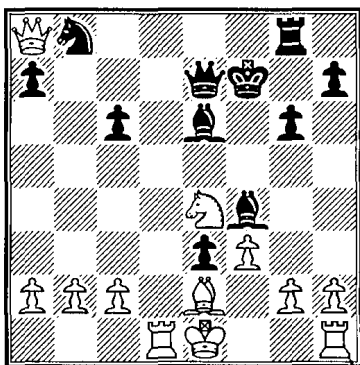
15...♖e7 16.♗xa8 ♜f7 17.♘e4!

This move is also the best in the position.

17...♙f4

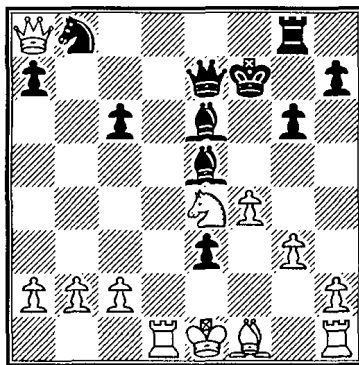
Black has to prevent the check on d6, which would follow after 17...♞f8 18.♗b7!

18.♙e2?



A critical moment; the initiative passes to Black and now White must defend accurately. Such is the price of one move in sharp positions.

Had White played the decisive 18.g3! he would have obtained great winning chances. However, it would have required lots of calculation as well as an accurate evaluation of the resulting sharp and complex positions. I present only two possible lines, which show how much calculative debris White would have had to wade through, if matters had taken this course: 18.g3! ♙e5 (White would also have had to be ready for 18...♞c8 19.gxf4 ♜f8 when he would have to find the line 20.♞d6 ♙f5 21.♞f6+ ♜g7 22.♙c4 without fearing the check: 22...♗b4+ 23.c3 ♗xc4 24.♗xa7+ and wins) 19.f4.



And now the consequences of 19...♗b4+ are anything but simple. The main line runs: 20.c3 ♗xe4 21.♗xa7+ ♜e8 22.fxe5 ♘d7 23.♗a8+ ♜e7 24.♗a3+ c5 25.♞xd7+ ♙xd7 26.♗xc5+ ♜e8. White must gather his courage and go for a king walk: 27.♗c4 ♗b1+ 28.♜e2 ♞f8 29.♜xe3 and it becomes clear that White really does have winning chances!

In Staunton's defense, as in the preceding game, it doesn't appear possible to calculate all the variations even with unlimited reflection time. One must trust one's intuition and in such a double-edged situation Morphy's advantage over his contemporaries was especially great. Along with tremendous feel for the dynamic, he also regarded the time factor in chess very highly and this grew into the adage that "Morphy's pieces do not retreat!"

The inevitability of such turnabouts, as occur in this game, only became generally understood much later with the appearance of Alekhine upon the chess scene – and even then, not until after he had wrested the crown for himself.

18...♜g7

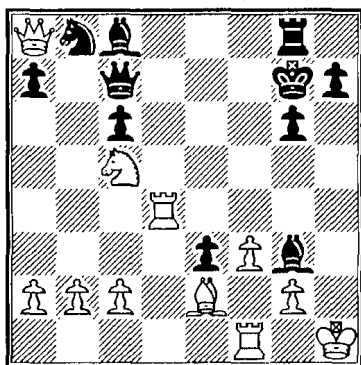
This is stronger than 18...♗c7 19.g3

♖e7! (19...♙a6? is bad, as Maróczy notes, because of 20.♗d7+! ♕xd7 21.♕xg8+) 20.gxf4 ♘d7 with an unclear position.

19.0-0

White had another attractive possibility: 19.♗d4. But after 19...♗c8 20.♘c5 ♕xc5 21.♗xf4 ♕e7! 22.♗e4 ♕d7 23.0-0 ♙a6 24.♕xc8 ♕xc8 25.♙a6 ♕xa6 26.♗xe6 ♕e2 Black retains the better chances.

19...♕c7 20.♘c5 ♙xh2+ 21.♖h1 ♙c8 22.♗d4 ♙g3



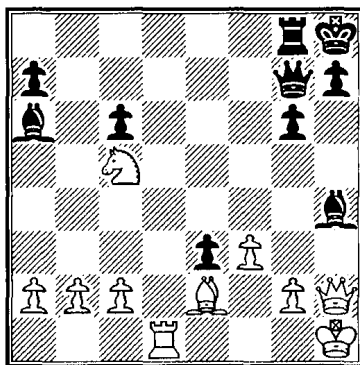
23.♗e4?

On 23.♗e4?! ♕e5 24.f4 ♕f6 25.f5 ♕g5 26.♙g4 e2 27.♗a1 ♙xf5 Black also gets a winning position. However, despite the dangerous looking nature of White's position, he could have kept real saving chances with 23.♘e4! ♘d7 24.♗a4 ♕f4 25.♘xg3 ♕xa4 26.f4.

23...♖h8 24.♗d1 ♕g7 25.♗h4 ♙xh4?

Yet again, Morphy relaxes and misses a simple crusher in a winning position: 25...♕e7.

26.♕xb8 ♙a6 27.♕h2?



White immediately errs in return. The correct move was 27.♕f4! which controls the h2-b8 diagonal and the h6-square. Then 27...♙xe2 28.♗d7 ♙e7 (28...♕f6 29.♕c7 ♗g7 30.♖h8+ ♗g8 31.♕c7 is a repetition; while 28...g5 29.♕c7 costs Black his queen) 29.♘e6 ♕f6 30.♗xe7! ♕xe7 31.♕e5+ ♗g7 32.♖b8+ leads to perpetual check.

Now, it's all over.

27...♙xe2 28.♗d7 ♕h6 29.♘e4 ♙c4 30.♘f6 e2 31.♗e7 ♕c1+ 32.♕g1 ♕xg1+ 33.♖xg1 e1♕+ 34.♗xe1 ♙xe1 0-1

These consultation games give us an insight into what might have happened had a match taken place! The American's superiority in dynamic positions was obvious and Staunton undoubtedly would have avoided open games at all costs; at this he was a great specialist.

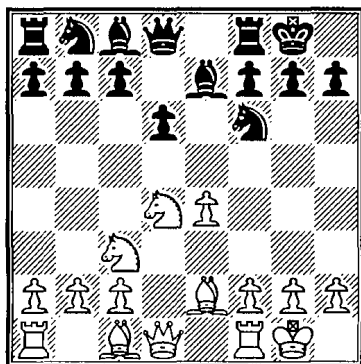
Morphy's first serious test in the greater world of chess was his match against Löwenthal. Although Morphy had played exceptionally well against Löwenthal as a 13-year-old, things were different now. His opponent had spent the intervening years playing regularly

against the strongest masters in Europe, acquiring invaluable experience on the highest level; and had become much more dangerous than when they first met. Additionally, Löwenthal knew what he was up against and took this match most seriously.

Löwenthal, J. - Morphy, P.

Match, London (1), July 19, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 exd4
4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♙e7 6.♙e2
0-0 7.0-0



7...c5!?

Morphy disregards the weakening of his pawn structure to activate his pieces. Such an approach frequently betrayed him, but it was completely in accordance with his opening repertoire. Even in our day, such a plan is considered good in this variation and the hole on d5 has become a normal occurrence in the Sicilian Defense.

8.♘f3 ♘c6 9.♙f4 ♙e6 10.♙d2 d5
11.exd5 ♘xd5 12.♙ad1

Black has no more problems as may be seen from 12.♙g3 ♘xc3 13.♙xc3 ♙b6 when Black is the first to begin generating threats. To maintain his small lead

in development, White gives up his dark-squared bishop, after which Morphy will have a small, but long-lasting advantage. 12.♘xd5 ♙xd5 13.♙xd5 ♙xd5 14.c3 was better, with equal play.

12...♘xf4 13.♙xf4 ♙a5

13...♙b6!? 14.b3 ♙ad8 was worth consideration with a slight edge to Black.

14.♙d3 ♙ad8

I like 14...♙b4!?, avoiding White's next.

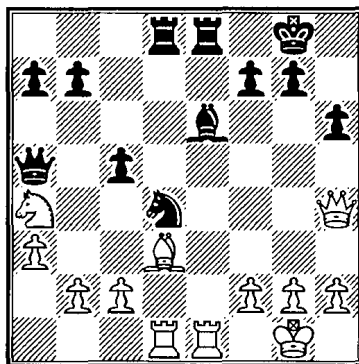
15.♘g5 ♙xg5 16.♙xg5 h6
17.♙h4

Inexact; 17.♙g3 was more accurate.

17...♘d4

17...♙d4!? was probably better. Black would have had the better chances after 18.♙g3 (18.f4?! ♙b6 is bad for White) and 18...♙fd8 or 18...♙b6.

18.a3 ♙fe8 19.♙fe1 ♙b6 20.♘a4
♙a5



I don't understand why Morphy avoided 20...♙c6!? 21.♘c3 c4 22.♙e4 ♙b6 which leads to a considerable ad-

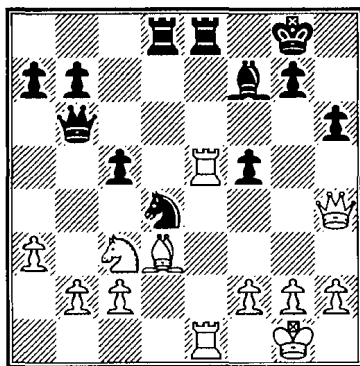
vantage to Black after 23. ♖a4? ♜b5.

21. ♖c3 f5?!

Morphy again incurs a significant weakening of his pawn structure; this time to deprive the enemy pieces of the e4-square and to seize still more territory.

Löwenthal easily demonstrates that Black lacks compensation. Black's dynamic advantages play a much lesser role *in this position* than White's static advantages. It is amazing that, throughout their entire match, Morphy stubbornly adhered to the same method of play, although it constantly caused him difficulties.

22. ♜e5 ♙f7 23. ♜de1 ♜b6?

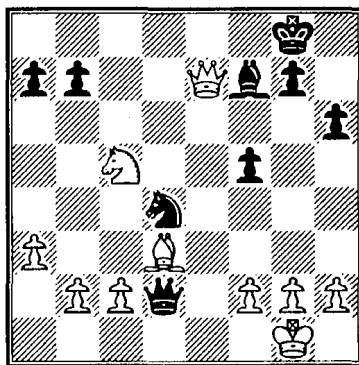


This costs Black a pawn. It would have been quite playable after the preliminary exchange 23... ♜×e5 24. ♜×e5 ♜b6 25. ♖a4? ♜d6 and now White cannot play 26. ♖×c5? g5+.

The basis of this error is easy to understand. Morphy did not wish to give up the file on general considerations; but he didn't delve deeply into the details – which was fairly typical of his play. Occasionally, he would not bother with

a thorough analysis of variations, even in complex positions, relying instead on intuition. This had the advantage of allowing him to play rapidly and save his strength for later; alternatively, it led to errors in those cases where accurate calculation was required – as is the case here:

24. ♜×e8+ ♜×e8 25. ♜×e8+ ♙×e8 26. ♜e7 ♙f7 27. ♖a4 ♜a5 28. ♖×c5 ♜d2



Now it's clear that after 28... ♖c6 29. ♖×b7! ♜d2 30. ♜c5! ♜d1+ 31. ♙f1 ♖d4 32. f3 ♖×c2 33. ♖d6 Black stands badly.

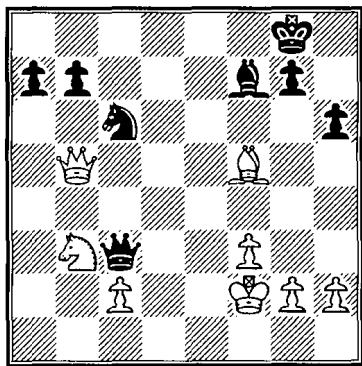
29. f3?

Löwenthal errs; the correct line was 29. h3! ♜c1+ 30. ♙f1 ♜×b2 (White has a large advantage after 30... ♙c4 31. ♜d8+ ♜h7 32. ♜×d4 ♙×f1 33. ♜h2) 31. ♖×b7 ♖×c2 32. ♖d6 when White has a dangerous initiative.

29... ♖c6! 30. ♜e2 ♜c1+ 31. ♜f2 ♜×b2 32. ♙×f5 ♜×a3 33. ♜b5

White loses after 33. ♖×b7? ♜b4 34. ♜a6 ♜h4+.

33... ♜c3 34. ♖b3



34...♖f6?

After the simple 34...b6 Black would have been left with a slight advantage. Had Morphy continued his chess career this foible would have caused him endless disappointment if he was unable to eradicate it.

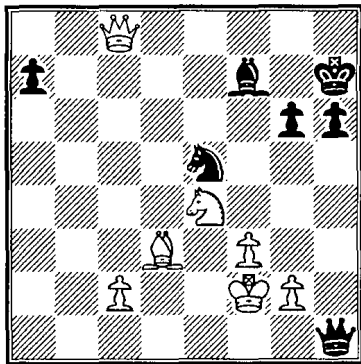
35.♙×b7 g6 36.♙c8+?!

Morphy's opponents frequently answered his major blunders with one of their own! After 36.♙e4 Black's chances for salvation would have been small. It has been said that great masters in their ascendancy – that is, when they are full of energy – give off a certain force that influences their opponents. And I, for one, believe it. I have seen this sort of thing before – but not often!

36...♙h7 37.♙d3 ♘e5

Having safely avoided some unpleasant consequences, Morphy continues to fight for the win, even though there is no objective basis for it. This is also a characteristic of very strong players during their ascendancy. The draw could have been attained by 37...♙×b3 38.c×b3 ♙d4+.

38.♘d2 ♙h4+ 39.♙f1 ♙×h2
40.♘e4 ♙h1+ 41.♙f2



41...♙c1?!

Continuing in the same uncompromising style, Black risks too much. 41...♙h4+ would still have forced the draw.

42.♙c3 ♙f4 43.♙e2 h5 44.♘f2?

White again misses his chance, after 44.♙c5! ♙h2 45.♙f1 ♙h1+ 46.♙f2 ♙h4+ 47.♙e3! he would have had a tangible advantage.

44...h4 45.♙d2 ♙g3 46.♙e3 a5
47.♙e4!

Now it is White who must play precisely.

47...♙e6 48.f4! ♘×d3 49.c×d3
♙g4+ 50.♙f1 ♙f5 51.♙e7+ ♙h6
½-½

The next game would also be a difficult one for Morphy.

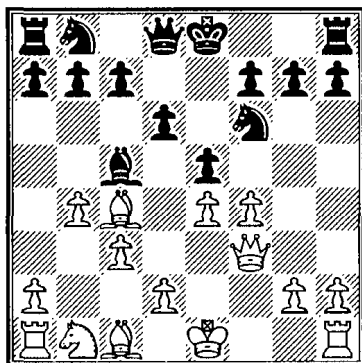
Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

Match, London (2), July 20, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♙c5 3.♘f3 d6 4.c3
♙g4 5.♙c4 ♙×f3 6.♙×f3 ♘f6

This move looks dubious, although the consequences aren't completely clear. 6...♖c6 would be safer.

7.b4?!



Morphy disdained the win of a piece by 7.d4 exd4 8.e5 ♖c6 (8...♖fd7? would be very bad: 9.b4 ♖b6 10.♗b5+; and White would have had a great advantage after 8...d5 9.exf6 dxc4 10.♞e2+ ♕d7 11.♞xc4) 9.exf6 ♞xf6. This position might not have appealed to him because, for a relatively small material sacrifice, Black would secure a long-term initiative. Objectively, the position might end up favoring White, although it's not completely clear.

However, the dubious evaluation of Morphy's move is not based upon his refusal to win material, but upon his excessively cavalier attitude toward pawns – which, as we know, do not move backwards. In the King's Gambit Declined line with 2...♗c5 Morphy would almost always play b2-b4, which frequently backfired. Here, too, I would prefer the simple 7.d3.

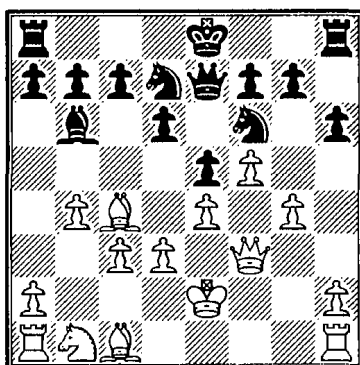
7...♗b6 8.d3 ♖bd7 9.f5

The drawbacks of this move are obvious: White's center becomes immobile,

and the central counterblow by d6-d5 cannot be avoided. Additionally, White can no longer open the f-file, with all its attendant benefits. Yet White no longer had much choice. It's too late to exchange on e5 and Morphy no longer wished to allow Black to capture on f4, followed by ...d6-d5 – he'd tried that already against Barnes!

This is why the young Capablanca, when playing White, avoided the move b2-b4 and exchanged on e5 at the earliest opportunity, thereby maintaining all the benefits of White's pawn structure.

9...♞e7 10.g4 h6 11.♞e2?



A bad move that unnecessarily and prematurely fixes the king's location and loses a tempo in a tense central situation. It could have had serious consequences for White, who should have played 11.g5 immediately.

11...c6

The best way to emphasize the shortcomings of White's move was 11...d5! 12.♗xd5 (12.exd5 e4 was altogether bad) 12...♖xd5 13.exd5 0-0-0 with a strong initiative for Black. And if White does not capture on d5, Black saves a

tempo that can be used for attack.

12.g5 h×g5 13.♙×g5 d5 14.♙b3

14.e×d5 e4 15.♗×e4 ♖×e4 16.♙×e7 ♖f2 would again be bad for White.

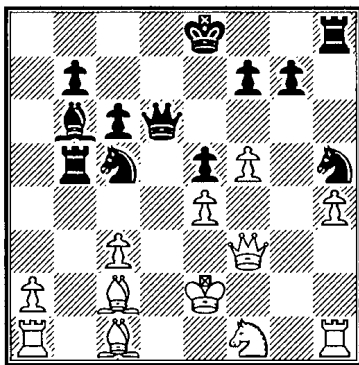
14...♗d6 15.♖d2

The white pawn chain receives another blow and all his weaknesses cannot be defended. Morphy could certainly foresee such a turn of events, but he apparently still could not admit to himself that he didn't know enough about chess!

15...a5! 16.b×a5

16.a3 was more stubborn.

16...♗×a5 17.h4 ♖h5 18.♖f1 ♖c5 19.♙c2 ♗b5 20.♙c1 d×e4 21.d×e4



21...♗b2?

Löwenthal has played excellently until now and 21...♖f4+ 22.♙×f4 e×f4 23.♗d1 ♗e5 would have given him a nearly decisive positional advantage. Instead, he got overzealous in his attempt to win, miscalculated, and lost.

22.♙×b2 ♖f4+ 23.♗e1 ♖fd3+ 16.c4?

24.♙×d3 ♖×d3+ 25.♗d2 ♖×b2+ 26.♗c2 ♗a3?!

Black loses his way, he should have played 26...♖c4 27.a4 ♙d8 although after 28.♗g1 White would still have a clear advantage.

27.♖d2 ♙c7?

The last mistake; 27...♖a4 28.♖c4 ♗c5 29.♗d3 ♗f2+ 30.♗d2 was more stubborn, although White would retain a great advantage.

28.♖b1 1-0

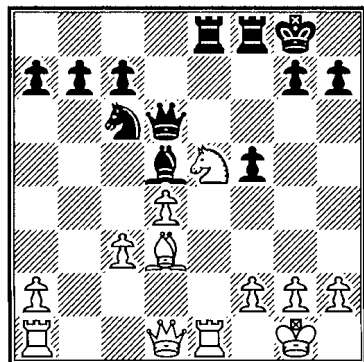
Löwenthal, J. - Morphy, P.

Match, London (3), July 22, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖f6 3.♖×e5 d6 4.♖f3 ♖×e4 5.d4 d5 6.♙d3 ♙e7 7.0-0 ♖c6 8.♗e1 f5

Again, this move; of course, using it to support the knight on e4 is more justifiable than in the previous example. Still, theory prefers 8...♙f5 or 8...♙g4.

9.c4 ♙e6 10.c×d5 ♙×d5 11.♖c3 ♖×c3 12.b×c3 0-0 13.♙f4 ♙d6 14.♙×d6 ♗×d6 15.♖e5 ♗ae8



Instead of the obvious 16.f4 with a small advantage, White leaves his center pawn undefended.

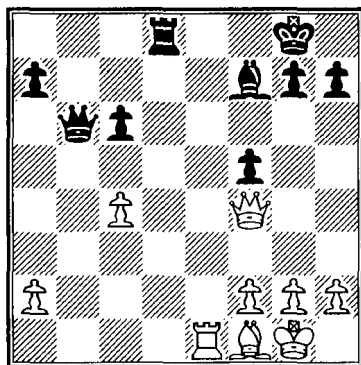
16...♙e6?

Yet Morphy inexplicably doesn't take it! After 16...♙d4! 17.cxd5 ♖xe5 18.♗a4 White would not have full compensation for the pawn.

17.♙xc6 ♖xc6 18.♙f1 ♙f7 19.♗d2 ♖xe1 20.♖xe1 ♖d8?!

This move does not look best; chances would have been equal after the natural 20...c5. Now, White develops an initiative and Black will have to defend.

21.♗a5! ♗xd4 22.♗xc7 ♗b6 23.♗f4



White retreats just when the most attractive continuation involved active measures aimed at developing his initiative. Löwenthal undoubtedly saw the line 23.♖e7 ♗xc7 (23...♖d1 is bad because of 24.♗c8+! ♖d8 25.♗xf5) 24.♖xc7 g6 25.♖xa7 (25.♖xc6 ♖d1 26.♖c7 ♖a1 leads only to equality) 25...♖d1 26.♖a4 with an extra pawn. Perhaps he saw even further: 26...f4 27.f3 c5 28.♗f2 ♖d2+ 29.♙e2 ♖b2 30.♗e1 ♖b1+ 31.♗d2 ♖b2+ and I, for

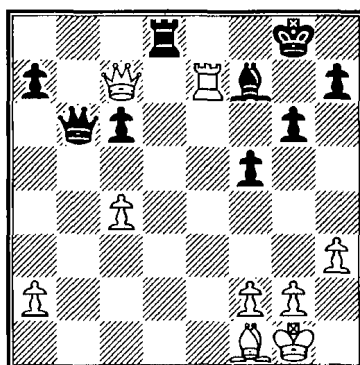
one, fail to see how White would win.

It is likely that Löwenthal, seeing he had a slightly better position, decided to play on a little. Nevertheless, this was the wrong decision from a practical standpoint because losing the initiative can never improve your position. One of the most important rules of play in dynamic positions is "fight for the initiative, and once obtained, hold onto it and develop it!"

23...g6 24.h3

24.g3 would not have altered the position.

24...♗b2 25.♗c7 ♗b6 26.♖e7



With the inclusion of the moves h2-h3 and ...g7-g6, the abovementioned counterblow for Black has become possible and Morphy, of course, doesn't overlook it.

26...♖d1! 27.♗c8+

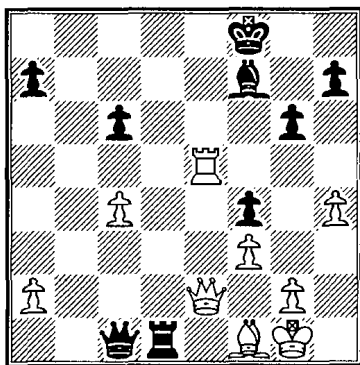
Taking the bishop leads to a draw: 27.♖xf7 ♖xf1+ 28.♗xf1 ♗b1+ 29.♗e2 ♗c2+ 30.♗e3 ♗c3+ 31.♗f4 ♗xc4+ 32.♗e5 ♗e4+ 33.♗f6 ♗h4+! 34.♗e6 ♗c4+.

27...♖d8 28.♗c7 ♖d1 29.♗e5 ♗b1

30. ♖e2?

After this unwarranted attempt to win I do not see how White could have saved the game. Despite the objective merits of White's position, he had to force the draw by perpetual with 30. ♖e8+.

30... ♖f8! 31. ♖e5 f4 32. f3 ♖c1 33. h4



33... h6!

Outstanding! White's forces are overburdened by having to defend his many weaknesses and Morphy places him in zugzwang.

34. c5

34. ♖e7 ♖xf1+ is not playable; neither is 34. ♖c5 ♖e3+! 35. ♖h1 ♖xf1 nor 34. ♖a5 ♖xc4.

34... ♖g7!

Another quiet move and White must suffer losses.

35. ♖e4

34. a4 a5 would change nothing; and after 35. h5 Black wins with 35... ♖f6! 36. h×g6 ♖c4. Morphy also demon-

strated a virtuoso grasp of the use of zugzwang in the final game of this match. Now, Black quickly achieves a decisive material advantage.

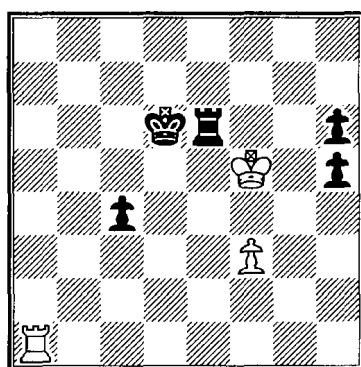
35... ♖xc5+ 36. ♖h2 ♖c1 37. ♖g1 ♖d2 38. ♖a6 ♖xa2 39. ♖d3 ♖d2 40. ♖a6 ♖d1 41. g3 f×g3 42. ♖g2 ♖c5 43. ♖×g3 ♖g1+ 44. ♖g2 ♖d2 45. ♖f1 ♖×f1 46. ♖×f1 ♖f6

I would have preferred bringing the rook to its "rightful" position: 46... ♖d7?! 47. ♖a6 c5 was an easy win.

47. ♖c4 ♖×c4 48. ♖×c4 ♖d6 49. ♖f4 ♖e6 50. ♖d4 ♖e7!

Morphy, again, relaxes his concentration in a winning position. He does not let the win slip, but his plan makes it more difficult. Placing the rook behind the passed pawn wins: 50... c5! 51. ♖d7 ♖c6 52. ♖×a7 c4 53. ♖a1 c3 54. ♖c1 c2 55. ♖e4 ♖c8.

51. ♖a4 ♖d6 52. ♖×a7 c5 53. ♖a1 c4 54. h5 g×h5 55. ♖f5



55... ♖e3?!

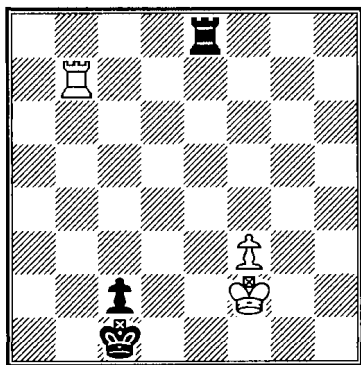
It's easy to see how each new inaccuracy makes Black's task that much more difficult!

55...♖e5+ 56.♔f6 (56.♔g6 ♖g5+ 57.♔xh6 ♖f5+) 56...♖c5 was much simpler. Morphy must have been familiar with the elementary idea of placing the rook behind the passed pawn. It is likely that his lack of experience playing in well-defined situations was showing. The rest is forced: 57.f4 c3 58.♖d1+ ♔c6 59.f5 c2 60.♖c1 ♔d5 61.♔g6 ♔e4 62.f6 ♔d3 63.f7 ♖c8 64.♔xh5 ♖f8 65.♔g6 ♔d2.

56.♔f4 ♖e8 57.♖a6+ ♔d5 58.♖xh6 c3 59.♖xh5+ ♔d4 60.♖h7 ♖c8 61.♖d7+ ♔c4 62.♔e3 ♖e8+ 63.♔f2

63.♔f4, which has been given as the strongest continuation, would also not have saved White. The main line goes: 63...c2 64.♖c7+ ♔d3 65.♖d7+ ♔c3 66.♖c7+ ♔d2 67.♖d7+ ♔c1 68.♖c7 ♖e1! 69.♔g5 ♖g1+! 70.♔f5 (70.♔h5 ♖f1) 70...♔d2 71.f4 c1♖ 72.♖xc1 ♖xc1 73.♔e4 ♖e1+ 74.♔d4 ♔e2! leading to a position that occurs in the game on move 75!

63...c2 64.♖c7+ ♔d3 65.♖d7+ ♔c3 66.♖c7+ ♔d2 67.♖d7+ ♔c1 68.♖b7



After 68.f4 Black would have had to find the only way to win: 68...♖b8

69.♔f3! ♔b2 70.♖d2 ♖b4! 71.♔g4 ♔c3 72.♖xc2+ ♔xc2 73.♔g5 ♔d3 74.f5 ♔e4 75.f6 ♔e5 76.f7 ♖b8 77.♔g6 ♔e6 78.♔g7 ♔e7.

After all those missed opportunities, Morphy gets a chance at redemption and wins by study-like means:

68...♖e5! 69.f4 ♖e4! 70.♔f3 ♖c4! 71.♖h7 ♔d2 72.♖h1 c1♖ 73.♖xc1 ♖xc1

Taking with the king was simpler.

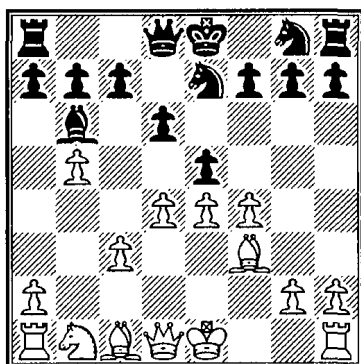
74.♔e4 ♖e1+ 75.♔d4 ♔e2! 76.f5 ♔f3 77.♔d5 ♔f4 78.f6 ♔g5 79.f7 ♖f1 80.♔e6 ♔g6 0-1

The next game was played in a completely opposite style.

Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

Match, London (4), July 23, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♖c5 3.♟f3 d6 4.c3 ♖g4 5.♖e2 ♖xf3 6.♖xf3 ♟c6 7.b4 ♖b6 8.b5 ♟ce7 9.d4

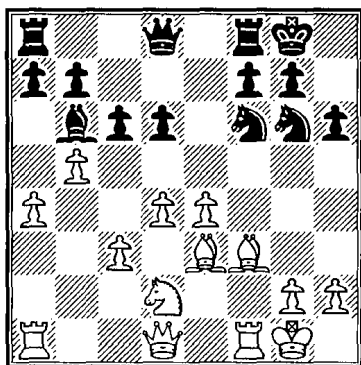


9...exf4?

It's amazing that this move was made by one of the best players of the day! It is quite inconceivable that an experi-

enced master would make such a terrible positional blunder. Black would have had an acceptable game after 9...exd4 10.cxd4 d5 11.e5 a6. Now, he will have a difficult position for a long time.

10.♙xf4 ♖g6 11.♙e3 ♜f6
12.♜d2 0-0 13.0-0 h6 14.a4 c6



15.♜e2?

This is inaccurate. White could have prevented unfavorable simplification with 15.♜c2 followed by 16.♜d3 as in the game; then if 15...♜e5 16.♙e2 ♜fg4 17.♙f4 g5 18.♙xg4 ♜xg4 19.♜d1 ♜d7 20.h3 leaves White with a clear advantage.

15...♞e8?!

15...♜h4 was necessary, trading off one of White's bishops.

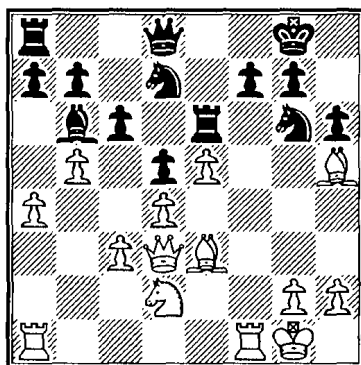
16.♜d3 d5

The drawbacks of this move are obvious, but Black has difficulties completing his development. Thus, on 16...♜d7?! White plays 17.a5 ♙c7 18.a6 with a great advantage.

17.e5 ♜d7 18.♙h5?

Black appears to be completely passive, which must have lulled Morphy's vigilance. He needed to stay alert to his opponent's threats and act precisely. Thus, on 18.♞ae1? comes the thematic 18...♜dxe5! 19.dxe5 ♜xe5 20.♜e2 ♜g4! and it's Black who wins! From this it follows that White should first deal with those elements that allow his opponent counterplay. The best way to do this was 18.♜h1!? keeping a significant advantage.

18...♞e6?



Amazingly, Black misses his chance. It certainly shouldn't have been hard to find 18...♜dxe5! 19.♜f5 (after 19.dxe5 ♞xe5 20.♙d4 ♞xh5 21.♜f3 ♞e5 22.♜xf7+ ♜h7 23.♜xb7 ♞e7 the position is unclear) 19...♜h8! when White has lost the greater part of his advantage. By all accounts, the play of both sides shows the effects of fatigue from the long, hard preceding game.

19.a5!

White need only show accurate calculation in the attack and even a weary Morphy is up to the task. It would seem that he was able to tap an additional energy reserve. Perhaps we can call it inspiration! Very similar events could

be observed in the games of Alekhine, Tal, and Kasparov. White would have only a tiny advantage after 19.♖xf7 ♜dxe5! 20.♜f5 ♜xf7 21.♜xe6 ♜e7!. With the text move we get something entirely different!

19...♙c7

Taking the pawn would bind the black queen to the defense of the bishop and she would be unable to help the king.

20.♖xf7! ♜xf7

Now that the bishop is driven off its important diagonal, taking back on e5 is useless: 20...♜dxe5 21.dxe5 ♜xe5 22.♜f5.

21.♜f5+ ♜e7 22.♙xg6 ♜g8

On 22...♜f8 there follows 23.♜g4. The rest is clear and simple.

23.♙f2 ♜xe5 24.dxe5 ♖f8 25.♙c5+ ♜d8 26.♙xf8 ♖xe5 27.♜f2 ♜e6 28.b6 axb6 29.axb6 ♜xg6 30.bxc7+ ♜xc7 31.♖b1 1-0

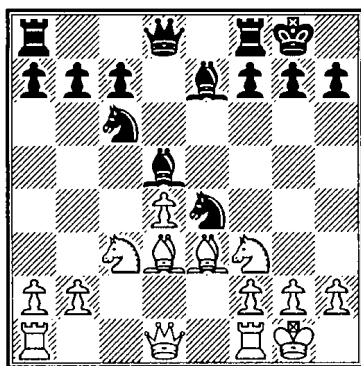
After such a victory one would think that the games would become one-sided. But not so! In the next game, Löwenthal demonstrated excellent fighting qualities, while Morphy showed excessive stubbornness in sticking to the methods that had previously betrayed him. This combination of elements led to an inevitable result.

Löwenthal, J. - Morphy, P.

Match, London (5), July 26, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♟f6 3.♟xe5 d6 4.♟f3 ♟xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♙d3 ♙e7

7.0-0 ♟c6 8.c4 ♙e6 9.cxd5 ♙xd5 10.♙e3 0-0 11.♟c3



11...f5?

White hasn't achieved anything special from the opening and Black's best course would have been to retreat the knight with 11...♟f6!? and an equal game. Yet, it was a matter of principle for Morphy never to acknowledge the necessity of losing time to maintain control over important points. He did not highly value the static element of chess. Even the inferior 11...♟xc3 12.bxc3 with a slight advantage to White, would have been better than the move in the game.

12.♟xd5 ♜xd5 13.♙c2?

White executes an unfortunate plan that loses time and places his pieces on inferior squares. After 13.a3 ♜h8 14.♜c2 he would have had a firm advantage.

13...♜h8 14.♙b3 ♜d6 15.d5 ♟a5 16.♙d4 ♙f6?!

He could have delayed this trade. After 16...♖ad8! Black has slightly better chances.

17.♖e1 ♖ad8 18.♙xf6 ♟xf6

The course of the game demonstrates that the queen recapture, 18...♙xf6!? would have been better.

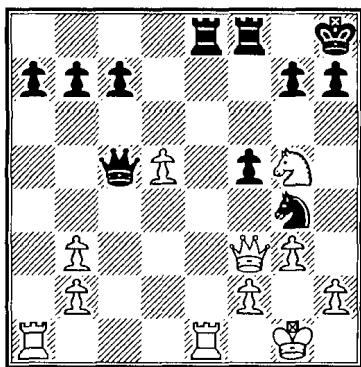
19.♖g5 ♘g4 20.g3 ♜c5

White has the upper hand after 20...♘xb3 21.♙xb3 ♜xd5 22.♗e6 ♜d2 23.♙f3! ♜d3 24.♜ed1!

21.♙e2 ♘xb3 22.a×b3 ♜de8

22...♙xd5 23.♗e6 ♜de8 24.♙c4! ♙xc4 25.b×c4 ♜f7 brings a small advantage to White, although Black probably should have entered this line to rid himself of the white center pawn that serves as the knight's support point.

23.♙f3



23...♗e5?

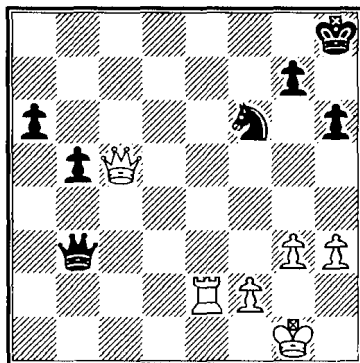
Morphy commits a serious error. 23...♜xe1+ 24.♜xe1 ♙b4 25.♙c3 ♙b6 26.♜e2 was necessary, when White keeps an advantage, but Black's position is still defensible after 26...h6 27.♗e6 ♜f7.

24.♙h5 h6 25.♜ad1 ♙c2 26.♗e6 ♘g4 27.♜f1 ♙b2

After 27...♜g8 28.♜c1 White would

have had a strong initiative, but this endgame contains practically no chances of salvation for Black.

28.♗xf8 ♜xf8 29.h3 ♘f6 30.♙xf5 ♙xb3 31.d6 c×d6 32.♜xd6 ♙f7 33.♜d2 a6 34.♜e1 b5 35.♙c5 ♜e8 36.♜de2 ♜xe2 37.♜xe2 ♙b3



This kind of position, with a poorly protected king, is always a strain on the defender. The queen and rook can transfer from wing to wing quicker than the queen and knight. White convincingly claims the victory.

38.♙f8+ ♘g8 39.♜e7 ♙d1+ 40.♜h2 ♙d4 41.♜e8 ♙c4 42.♜a8 b4 43.♜a7 ♙d4 44.♜xa6 b3 45.♜a8 ♙d5 46.♜a7 ♙d4 47.♜b7 ♙c3 48.♙f7 ♜h7 49.♜xb3 ♙e5 50.♜b7 h5 51.♜d7 ♘h6 52.♙d5 ♙f6 53.♙d3+ ♜h8 54.♜d8+ ♘g8 55.♙d4 ♙f3 56.♜g1 ♜h7 57.♙d5 ♙xd5 58.♜xd5 ♘f6 59.♜e5 ♜g6 60.f4 ♜f7 61.♜g2 ♜g6 62.♜f3 ♜f7 63.♜a5 ♜g6 64.♜a6 ♜f7 65.f5 ♘d5 66.g4 h×g4+ 67.h×g4 ♘e7 68.♜f4 ♘d5+ 69.♜e5 ♘f6 70.♜a7+ 1-0

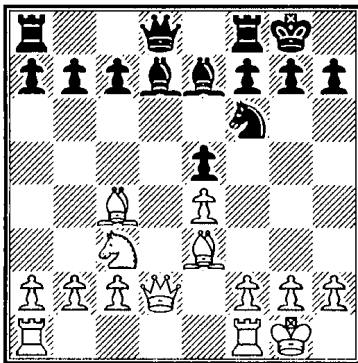
Morphy won the next two games fairly easily after terrible blunders by his op-

ponent, so we will pass over them and proceed to the 8th game.

Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

Match, London (8), July 30, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 exd4
4.♙xd4 ♙d7 5.♙e3 ♘f6 6.♘c3
♙e7 7.♙c4 ♘c6 8.♙d2 ♘e5
9.♘xe5 dxex5 10.0-0 0-0



White obtained a slight lead in development out of the opening and somewhat better piece coordination. Therefore, developing the initiative, by retaining and possibly increasing these advantages, requires energetic action. Thus, White's following pawn thrust is completely justified, although it weakens his pawn structure, because the dynamic considerations outweigh the static.

11.f4!? ♙d6

Taking the pawn would be bad for Black: 11...exf4 12.♙xf4 ♙c5+ 13.♖h1 ♙c6 14.♙e2 because White creates unpleasant threats in the center.

12.f5 ♙c6 13.♙e2 h6?

Black's move was too passive as every tempo is important. 13...♙xe4!? was

also unfavorable, since 14.♘xe4 ♙xe4 15.f6 leads to a dangerous White initiative. But 13...♙xe4!? was interesting. Then after 14.♘xe4 ♘xe4 15.♙d5 ♘f6 16.♙xb7 ♖b8 17.♙a6 White's pieces are temporarily tied down. If he could untangle them without losing time he would again have the upper hand.

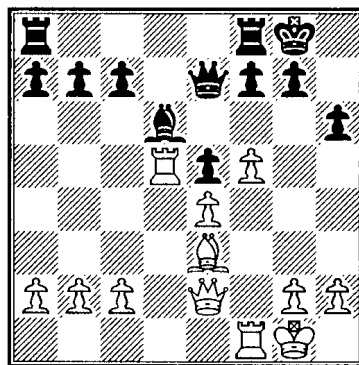
14.♖ad1 ♙e7

Now after 14...♙xe4 15.♘xe4 ♘xe4 16.♙g4 ♘f6 (16...♘g5 17.f6! would be dangerous) 17.♙g6 ♖h8 18.♙xf7 White is undoubtedly better.

15.♙d5 ♙xd5?!

Black begins a series of unfavorable exchanges that leaves him with the "bad" bishop and allows White to occupy the center. White is also better after 15...♙b4?! 16.♙xc6 bxc6 17.♘a4! ♘xe4 18.♙xh6. Black's best choice was to complete his development without forcing matters. After 15...♖fd8 White could reply 16.♙f2!? and retain the advantage.

16.♘xd5 ♘xd5 17.♖xd5



17...f6?!

Yet another unfortunate decision; the

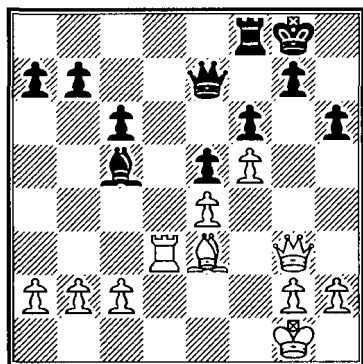
correct 17...♖f6 18.♞fd1 ♞fd8 leaves White better, but with plenty of fight left in the position. Whereas now, the natural 18.♞fd1 ♞fd8 19.♖d3 ♖f7 20.c4 allows White to develop strong central pressure and leaves Black with a hard defensive task.

Instead, Morphy makes an odd decision contrary to the spirit of the position and to his own principles of play, which say that successful operations are only possible when all one's pieces are working together. Moreover, he soon commits an elementary miscalculation in a simple variation! He was undeniably suffering poor form that day.

18.♖g4?! c6! 19.♞d3 ♠c5
20.♖g3?!

After a serious positional oversight, White now commits a tactical error! Correct was 20.♖e2 ♞ad8 21.♞fd1 retaining a small advantage.

20...♞ad8 21.♞fd1 ♞x d3 22.♞x d3



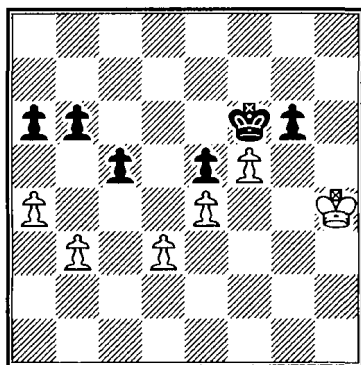
22...♞d8!

Morphy overlooked this move. If his queen were on e2, the d1-square would be protected from the vital check.

23.♠xc5

Here's the rub. After 23.♞x d8+ ♖x d8 24.♠xc5? Black has some checks: 24...♖d1+ 25.♖f2 ♖xc2+. Now the position simplifies by force into an equal endgame.

23...♖xc5+ 24.♖f2 ♖x f2+
25.♖x f2 ♞x d3 26.cx d3 c5 27.g4
♖f8 28.a4 b6 29.♖g3 ♖f7
30.♖h4 ♖f8 31.♖h5 ♖f7
32.b3 ♖f8 33.♖g6 ♖g8 34.h3
♖f8 35.h4 ♖g8 36.g5 hx g5
37.hx g5 fx g5 38.♖x g5 ♖f7
39.♖h4 ♖e7 40.♖g4 ♖f6
41.♖h5 a6 42.♖h4 g6



43.a5!?

Even in a hopelessly drawn endgame, Morphy continues to seek chances.

43...bxa5 44.fx g6 ♖x g6 45.♖g4
a4

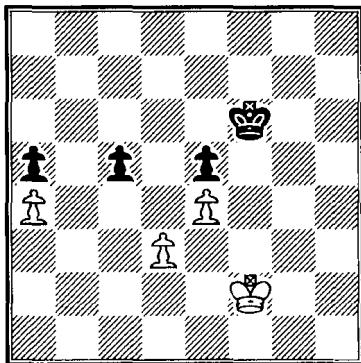
Forced.

46.bxa4 a5 47.♖f3 ♖f6 48.♖f2
♖f7 49.♖g3 ♖g7!

The distant opposition! Nowadays, nobody would play out this kind of position under a normal time-control. But in those days, one might still hope for a miracle: 49...♖f6? 50.♖h4 ♖g6

51.♔g4 when White wins by maneuvering around his counterpart.

50.♖f2 ♖f6



51.♔g1?

Unbelievable! This move was a just reward for ignoring objective reality. It was not that Morphy unforgivably overlooked an elementary continuation, but that this oversight was the price he paid for his numberless victories in America and for his excessively easy victories in the previous two games.

He was betrayed, if I may so put it, by an accumulated euphoria, which leads to a weakened grasp of reality. Still, when such an unquenchable lust for battle is combined with great strength of play, the result is often more gains than losses. Yet, even the most enormous thirst for victory does not negate our instinct for self-preservation. For those wishing to learn more about this phenomenon, I recommend Mednis' book, *How to Beat Bobby Fischer*.

51...♖g5 52.♖g2

After 52.♖f2 ♖f4 53.♔e2 Black wins by 53...c4 – the elementary “pip” that Morphy overlooked!

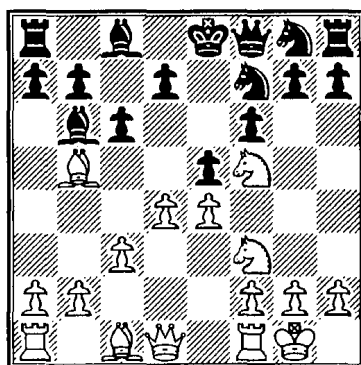
52...♖f4 53.♖f2 c4 54.dxc4 ♖xe4 55.♖e2 ♖d4 56.♖f3 ♖xc4 57.♖e4 ♖b4 58.♖xe5 ♖xa4 59.♖d4 ♖b3 0-1

Foolish, futile losses such as this are often a motivating factor, and so it was here. Morphy won the next two games.

Löwenthal, J. - Morphy, P.

Match, London (9) August 5, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 ♙c5 4.c3 ♖e7 5.0-0 f6 6.d4 ♙b6 7.♘a3 ♘d8 8.♘c4 ♘f7 9.♘e3 c6 10.♘f5 ♖f8



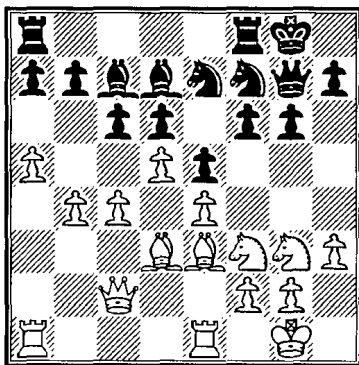
Morphy repeats the experiment played against him in Morphy-Boden. However, that was only a psychological experiment aimed at a peculiarity of Morphy's play. From an objective standpoint the experiment failed because Morphy himself showed how White ought to play, and achieved a strategically winning position. Here, the two games diverge as Morphy played the bishop to a4.

11.♙d3 g6 12.♘g3 d6 13.a4 ♙g4 14.a5 ♙c7 15.h3 ♙d7 16.♖b3 ♘d8 17.♙e1 ♙e6 18.♖c2 ♘e7 19.b4 ♖g7 20.c4 0-0 21.♙e3 ♘f7

The attempt to free himself with

21...exd4?! is unsound: 22.♟xd4 ♔d7
23.♞ge2 with a great advantage to White.

22.d5 ♔d7



23.♞ad1

Löwenthal has played consistently and strongly, seriously cramping his opponent's forces. Now was the time to execute concrete attacking measures. One such plan was 23.♞ab1!? ♟h8
24.a6 b6 25.dxc6 ♟xc6 26.c5 breaking in the front, when Black would have been in trouble.

23...♟h8 24.♟h1

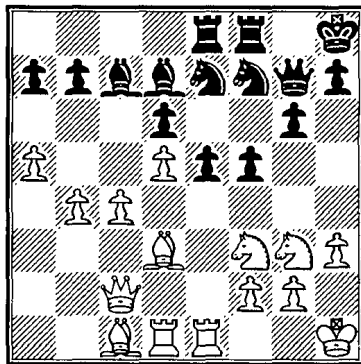
Dithering again; now Black gets time to regroup his cramped pieces.

24...cxd5 25.exd5

White retains the possibility of the strategically important break c4-c5, but allows Black to become active on the kingside.

25...f5 26.♔c1 ♞ae8?!

See next diagram. Morphy could have exploited his opponent's vacillation and spent a tempo on prophylaxis with



26...b6!, which would have delayed the c4-c5 break for quite a long time, while retaining all his trumps. However, he was still unacquainted with all the clever twists of play in closed positions. There can be little doubt that Morphy would have learned such secrets quite rapidly had he continued to pursue a chessplaying career – perhaps, in fact, even before Steinitz!

27.♔b2 ♟g8

Here too, 27...b6!? 28.axb6 axb6 29.♞a1 ♞a8 would still have been useful.

28.♟c3 ♟f6 29.♔b1

The players have reached a position that structurally resembles some form of Spanish/Indian setup. It is difficult for Black because he has not yet begun to create threats on the kingside, where he has amassed a large amount of force. Meanwhile, White's destruction of the base of Black's pawn chain, the d6-pawn, is a matter of the next few moves.

29...♞g8

It's hard to believe that Black could play so slowly. Now was the time to advance

his f-pawn to open lines for his pieces:
29...f4 30.♖e4 g5 31.♗xf6 ♜xf6 32.c5
g4 33.hxg4 ♕xg4 and Black would
have obtained real chances for
counterplay.

30.♞d2

It's a good thing for Black that White
is also being so leisurely! 30.c5!? looked
much more uncomfortable for Black.

30...♜h6

Morphy embarks on a long maneuver
that unfortunately cannot be carried to
its logical conclusion. He still should
have played 30...f4 31.♖e4 ♖xe4
32.♕xe4 g5 without delay.

31.♗h2 f4 32.♖e4 ♖xe4 33.♕xe4 g5 34.f3 ♜h4

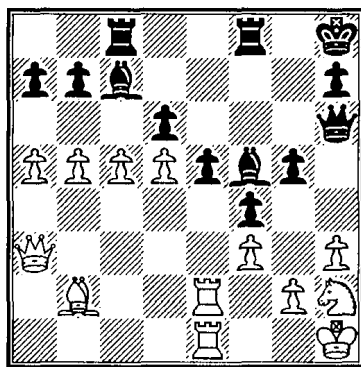
This queen maneuver was the point of
Black's plan.

35.♞f1 ♗h6

It becomes clear that the continuation
of Black's attack costs an important
pawn: 35...h5 36.c5 g4 37.fxg4 hxg4
38.♞xf4 and even Black's best line:
38...♜e1+ 39.♖f1! ♗g5 40.♜g3 ♜xg3
41.♖xg3 leaves White significantly
better.

36.♞e2 ♗f5 37.♕xf5 ♕xf5 38.c5 ♜h6 39.♞fe1 ♞gf8 40.b5 ♞c8 41.♜a3?!

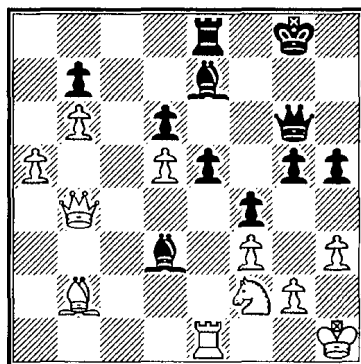
See next diagram. Now, when Black's
knight has been exchanged and no
longer protects the e5-pawn, is the cor-
rect time to "go for it": 41.cxd6 ♕xd6
42.♜b3 ♞fe8 43.♕xe5+ ♕xe5
44.♞xe5 ♞xe5 45.♜b2!



41...♜g8 42.b6 axb6 43.cxb6?

Astonishing! White's whole strategy
has been the removal of the d6-pawn
and suddenly he just ignores it! The
normal continuation 43.axb6 ♕b8
44.cxd6 ♕xd6 45.♜b3 ♞fe8 46.♗g4
♕xg4 47.fxg4 ♜f6 would have retained
White's advantage, albeit smaller than
it might have been earlier.

43...♕d8 44.♞c1 ♞xc1+ 45.♕xc1 ♜g6 46.♜b4 ♕d3 47.♞e1 ♕e7 48.♗g4 ♞e8 49.♕b2 h5 50.♖f2



Comparing this diagram with the pre-
vious one accents how much Black's
situation has improved. In complete ac-
cordance with his style, Morphy begins
decisive action at once, not begrudg-
ing the possible loss of a pawn in his
struggle to seize the initiative.

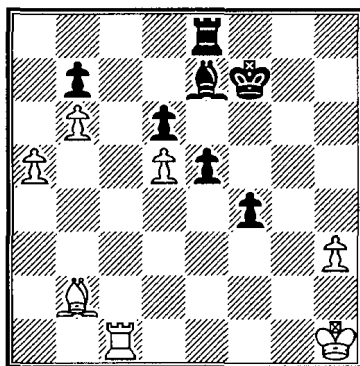
50...g4! 51.♖c3

On 51.f×g4 h×g4 52.♗×g4 ♕h4 53.♞c1 ♕f5, or 51.h×g4 h×g4 52.♗×g4 ♕f5 53.♞c1 ♖f7 Black seizes the initiative, which may be transformed at any moment into a direct attack.

51...♕f5 52.f×g4 h×g4 53.h×g4 ♕×g4 54.♗×g4

On 54.a6 Black has the strong reply 54...♕h4.

54...♖×g4 55.♞c1 ♖f7 56.♖h3 ♖×h3+ 57.g×h3



The game has forcibly progressed into a sharp endgame in which Black has two connected passed pawns and the more active king, but White's queenside pawns can become very dangerous. Every tempo is vital and the result hinges on each player's calculation ability. Understandably, Morphy would have an advantage over any opponent.

57...f3

Logical and strong; White has a choice of continuations, but all of them lead to Black's advantage.

58.♞f1

Deploying the king with 58.♞g1 would lead to a position where Black must win: 58...♞g8+ 59.♖f1 ♞g2 and now either 60.♕a3 ♕g5 61.♞e1 ♕d2 62.a6 ♕×e1 63.a×b7 ♞g8 64.♖×e1 (64.♕×d6 f2+) 64...♖e7; or 60.a6 b×a6 (60...♞×b2? 61.a7 ♕a2 62.♞c8) 61.♕a3 ♕d8 62.b7 ♕b6 63.♕c5 ♕×c5 64.♞×c5 ♞b2 65.♞c3 ♞×b7.

Many commentators have suggested 58.a6; but then Black wins as follows 58...b×a6 59.♞f1 (59.b7 ♞b8 60.♞c7 ♞g8! 61.♞c1 f2! 62.♞f1 ♕h4 63.♕c1 ♞b8 64.♕e3 ♞×b7 65.♕×f2 ♕×f2 66.♞×f2+ ♖g6 67.♞c2 ♞b5 68.♞c6 ♞×d5 69.♞×a6 ♞d2+) 59...e4 60.♕d4 ♕g5 61.b7 ♞b8 62.♞b1 e3.

Now, his task is even simpler.

58...e4 59.♕d4 ♕f6 60.♕e3 ♞a8 61.♕d2 ♕d4 62.h4

62.♞e1 f2 63.♞f1 ♞g8 also loses.

62...♞g6 63.♖h2 ♞f8 64.♖g3 f2 65.♖g2 e3 66.♕e1 ♖h5!? 67.♖g3 f×e1 ♖+ 0-1

Morphy won the tenth game after a gross blunder by his opponent. However, the ease of his win played a cruel trick, by putting him into an overly optimistic mood. In the eleventh game he essayed the Sicilian as Black, for the first and final time in his career; and he chose a poor variation at that. As a result, he was a piece down by move 14 and all his stubborn resistance could not prevent Löwenthal from efficiently realizing his great material advantage.

In the next game the "real" Morphy was ready to fight for victory and unafraid of risk.

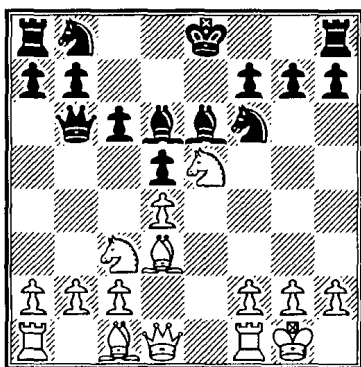
Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

Match, London (12), August 14, 1858

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.♟f3
♞f6 5.♞d3 ♞e6?!**

Black should have kept the e-file open for his rook. Additionally, this move gives White an extra development tempo, allowing him to seize the initiative.

6.0-0 ♞d6 7.♞c3 c6 8.♞e5 ♜b6



9.♞e3

White has a slightly more active position and should be looking for ways to increase his activity. Karsten Müller discovered: 9.♞e1! 0-0 (9...♜xd4? 10.♞b5 would be bad for Black) 10.♞a4 ♜a5 11.c3 which shores up the important e5-square.

Morphy chooses a more radical approach. He sees no advantage in his rook's placement at e1 and does not want to waste a tempo on "overprotection." However, he is prepared to sacrifice a pawn for the quick mobilization of his forces. Such an approach was quite typical. He firmly believed that sacrificing material to obtain long-term activity – even though it might not

look very strong at first – was completely normal and justified.

This distinguished him from his contemporaries. They also sacrificed material, but with concrete goals in mind such as an attack, the creation of immediate threats, the creation of a strong pawn center, or the prevention of the enemy's development. The difference might not seem very great, but it was a matter of principle. Morphy's approach was only adopted on a regular basis many decades later.

9...♞bd7?!

Black's best course of action would have been to accept the pawn sacrifice. After 9...♜xb2!? White could continue 10.♞e2! (with or without the insertion of 10.♜d2 ♜b6 first) 10...♞xe5 11.dxe5 ♜xe5 12.♞f4 ♜h5 13.♜d2 with a confusing, murky position.

10.f4 ♞xe5

Now taking the pawn is much more dangerous: 10...♜xb2! 11.♜e1 ♞b4 12.♞b1 ♜xc3 13.♞xb4 ♜xe1 14.♞xe1 ♞b6 15.a4 and White has strong pressure.

11.fxe5 ♞g4 12.♜d2 ♞xe3

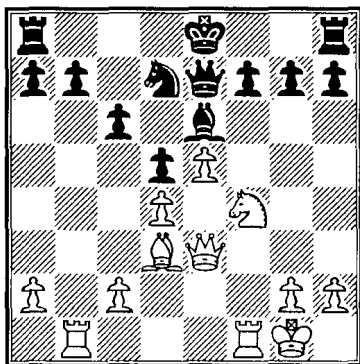
12...♞dx5? 13.♞a4.

**13.♜xe3 ♜xb2 14.♞e2 ♜a3
15.♞f4**

Having sacrificed a pawn, White does not throw himself into an immediate attack because it's not practical. Instead he quietly improves the position of his pieces, unhurriedly but inexorably in-

creasing the pressure. The assault will begin once White's pieces are ready for concerted action.

15...♖e7 16.♞ab1



16...0-0-0

Black's choice is not a simple one: 16...b6?! is met with 17.♗h5 and if 17...0-0? then 18.♗f6+! gxf6 19.♖g3+ ♖h8 20.♖h4. And there would be a similar reaction to 16...♗b6?! The most acceptable line appears to be 16...♗f8 17.♗h5 ♞g8; but then how does Black develop? With Black castling long, White brings all his forces to bear against Black's king.

17.♙e2 ♗b6 18.♖b3 ♞d7

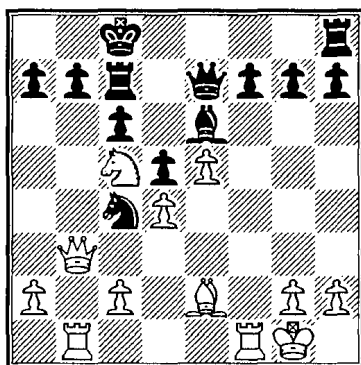
18...♗c4?! 19.♗×e6 ♗d2? 20.♖d3 is bad for Black. However, he should have given serious consideration to 18...♖b8 followed by a bishop retreat to c8.

19.♗d3 ♗c4 20.♗c5

Note the apparent unhurriedness of Morphy's actions: gradually, move by move, he improves the position of his pieces. We know perfectly well how decisively, energetically and spectacularly he could sweep away his opposi-

tion, once there were objective grounds for doing so. Here we see how coolly and sure-handedly he strengthens his position, as long as he does not see the proper conditions for a direct attack. In his ability to foresee and sense that his sacrifice would lead "only" to the chance to gradually strengthen his position, we see what distinguished Morphy from his contemporaries. This was a completely different level of chess understanding, which would be unattainable for many years, even by the best players who followed him.

20...♞c7?



Löwenthal fails to withstand the pressure and collapses. After the forced 20...♗d2 21.♖g3 ♗×f1 22.♙×f1 b6 (22...♞c7? 23.♗×b7 gives White a decisive attack) 23.♙a6+ ♖b8 24.♗×d7+ ♖×d7 25.♖×g7 ♖d8 Black is only somewhat worse.

Now, White finally has the chance for a direct attack.

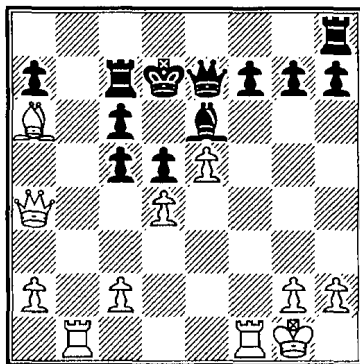
21.♖a4 b6

21...b5 22.♖a6+ ♖d8 23.♙×c4 d×c4 24.a4 ♙c8 25.♖a5 also leaves Black in a bad way.

22.♙×c4! b×c5

22...dxc4 would be met with 23.♖xb6!
– an important point!

23.♙a6+ ♔d7



24.♙b7!

It would appear that Löwenthal underestimated the force of this incursion in making his 20th move. Black is defenseless.

24...♞d8?!

This loses at once, but there is no salvation in 24...♞d8 25.♙xc6 cxd4 26.♙a5 (26.♙xd5 would be good too; or 26.♞b8+ ♞c8 27.♞b7 ♞c7 28.♙a5) 26...♞c8 27.♙a4 ♙c5 28.♞b5 ♙c6 29.♞fb1.

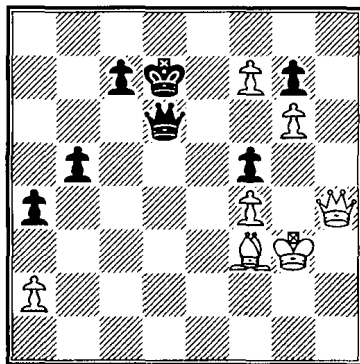
25.♙xc6+ 1-0

Morphy played horribly in the next game! He could have resigned by the 26th move; he was soon a piece down without the slightest hope. But he played on, and a miracle occurred:

Löwenthal, J. - Morphy, P.

Match, London (13), September 19, 1858

In the next diagram, after the unbelievable 39.♙h8?? ♙xg6+ 40.♞f2



♙xf7 41.a3 ♙e7 42.♞g3 ♙e1+ 43.♞g2 ♙d2+ 44.♞g3 ♙e1+ a draw was agreed ½-½.

The simplest win was 39.♙h7 ♙f6 (39...♙f8 40.♞g8) 40.♞g8 ♙xg6+ 41.♞f2 ♙b6+ 42.♞f1, although there were many uncomplicated alternatives.

Such a save, of course, brings little joy. We must suppose that Morphy's wild swings in playing form had much to do with his frail physique. Additionally, it appears that Morphy had considerable trouble with his openings. He often had difficulties playing the black pieces and his opening repertoire was relatively narrow and old-fashioned. This was particularly clear in the match with Löwenthal, who was probably the greatest openings expert of his day.

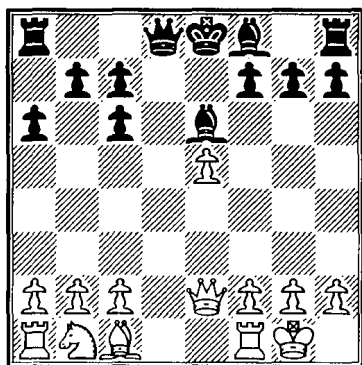
All of this followed from his lack of practical experience against the leading players of his time, even though they were very much his inferiors regarding raw talent. And the provincialism of the American chess atmosphere of those years must have played a role as well. Still, all of these matters were correctable.

The last game of the match ended gloriously for Morphy!

Morphy, P. - Löwenthal, J.

Match, London (14), September 21, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6
4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.d4 exd4 6.e5 ♘e4
7.0-0 ♘c5 8.♙xc6 dxc6 9.♘xd4
♘e6 10.♘xe6 ♙xe6 11.♖e2



11...♙c5?!

This natural looking move is the root of all Black's troubles. After 11...♖d4 chances would have been about equal.

12.♘c3 ♖e7 13.♘e4 h6

Black must defend himself against the threat of 14.♙g5.

14.♙e3!

An outstanding positional decision; by exchanging bishops White deprives his opponent of the bishop pair, and gains the upper hand on the dark squares. The last two moves offer a clear demonstration of why Black's 11th move was an error.

14...♙xe3 15.♖xe3 ♙f5

15...0-0-0 was bad because of 16.♖a7; but 15...b6!? 16.f4 0-0-0 was worth considering: if then 17.f5? ♙c4.

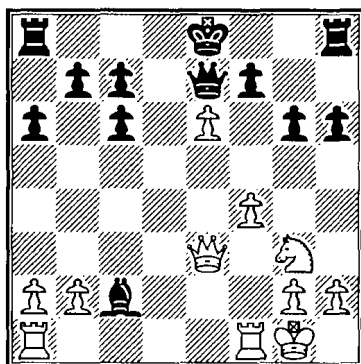
16.♘g3!?

16.f4 ♙xe4 17.♖xe4 0-0-0 keeps a small advantage for White. But Morphy bravely sacrificed a pawn for a small, but lasting initiative. Today, this is how chess is played, but in those days nobody played this way. It was only Alekhine who first began to regularly treat the game this way -- and he was born 55 years after Morphy.

16...♙xc2 17.f4 g6

17...0-0 18.f5 ♖g5 19.♖c3 ♙a4 20.f6 leaves White with a dangerous initiative.

18.e6!



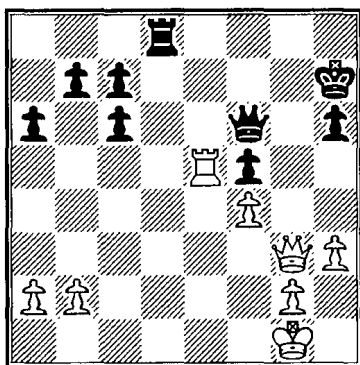
Simple, but effective; the aesthetic effect of this uncomplicated stroke is considerably enhanced by the fact that it did not come about by chance, but as the logical consequence of the pawn sacrifice on move 16.

18...♙f5

Short castling would be worse for Black. After 18...0-0 19.♖f2! ♙f5 (19...♙a4? 20.b3 ♙b5 21.a4) 20.♘xf5 gxf5 21.♖b3 b6 22.♖e1 White would have a strong initiative. But long castling would be just awful: 18...0-0-0?

19.♖ac1! ♔d3 (19...♔a4 also loses:
20.♗a7 ♗xe6 21.b3 ♔b5 22.♖fd1 ♖d6
23.♗a8+) 20.♗a7 ♗xe6 21.♖cd1! (It
has to be this rook: after 21.♖fd1 c5!
22.♗a8+ ♖d7 23.♖xd3+ ♗e7 24.♖xd8
♗e3+ it's Black who's winning!)
21...♗c4 22.♖f3 and wins.

19.♘xf5 ♗xf5 20.exf7+ ♖xf7
21.♗h3 ♗f6 22.♖ae1 ♖he8
23.♖e5! ♗g6 24.♖fe1 ♖xe5
25.♖xe5 ♖d8 26.♗g3+ ♗h7
27.h3



27...♖d7?

To save himself Black had to play
27...♖d5! at once; and then after
28.♖e8 ♗g7 29.♗h4 ♖d1+ 30.♗h2
♖d2 31.♖e7 ♖xg2+ the game would
end in a perpetual.

This line is not absolutely forced for
White, but I don't see any real winning
chances for him otherwise. As
Botvinnik said about one of his games
in *Analytical and Critical Works Part
III*: "Even now, analyzing this game, I
find it hard to reproach myself for any-
thing. But still, having gotten the bet-
ter of the opening, I was only able to
retain the more pleasant position, which
still must be evaluated as drawish. Well,
it happens, sometimes."

Now, Morphy inexorably tightens the
noose.

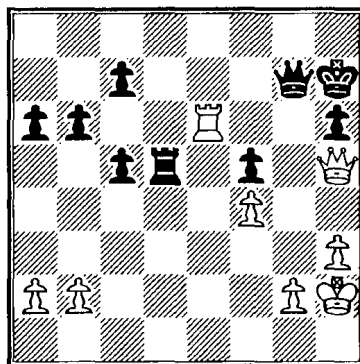
28.♗e3 b6 29.♗h2!

Morphy, always energetic, proceeds to
straightforwardly strengthen the posi-
tion, knowing that *the necessary level
of coordination between his pieces* has
not yet been attained.

29...c5 30.♗e2 ♗g6 31.♖e6 ♗g7

White also develops his initiative after
31...♗f7 32.♗e5 c4 33.♖e8.

32.♗h5! ♖d5



All of Black's pieces are bound to the
defense of weak squares and weak
points, which means that Black has no
reserves to bring up because of the
small number of pieces left on the
board. So the chances of the passive
side falling into zugzwang are very
great.

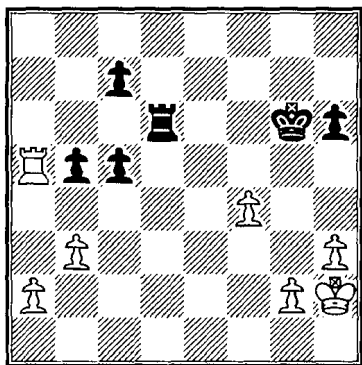
33.b3!

Black already has a hard time finding
an acceptable reply.

33...b5

After 33...a5 34.a4 the zugzwang is still
in force.

34. ♖×a6 ♜d6 35. ♗×f5+ ♗g6
36. ♗×g6+ ♗×g6 37. ♖a5



There can be no doubt that White must win, but he must play very precisely. Naturally, he must first calculate the pawn endgame, which is won by a hair's breadth – move on move:

37. ♖×d6+ c×d6 38. ♗g3 b4 39. ♗f3 d5
40. g4 ♗f6 41. h4 ♗e6 42. h5 ♗f6
43. ♗e3 ♗e6 44. g5 h×g5 45. f×g5 ♗f5
46. g6 ♗f6 47. ♗f4 d4 48. ♗g4 ♗g7
49. ♗g5 d3 50. h6+ ♗g8 51. ♗f6 d2
52. h7+.

Was Morphy correct to avoid this line or should we be critical of his decision? It's hard to give a categorical answer. He often chose a complicated way to win if it was more comfortable for him, and this approach had some justification. The best way to realize a great advantage is not objectively by the shortest means, but by *the most secure means for the individual involved*. And all the better when both are the same! Since Morphy would often stumble once he had reached a winning position, then we can appreciate the intelligence of such a young player and his remarkable ability of self-programming, as Botvinnik would have called it.

37... ♖b6

White would have had greater problems to solve after 37... c6 38. a4 b×a4 39. ♖×a4 ♜d3 (39... ♜d4 40. ♖×d4 c×d4 41. ♗g3 h5 42. h4 c5 43. ♗f3 ♗f5 44. g3 ♗f6 45. ♗e4 ♗e6 46. b4 is not enough, either) 40. ♖c4; but here too, White's advantage would be obvious, and easily exploited.

38. g4 c6 39. ♗g3 h5 40. ♖a7 h×g4
41. h×g4 ♗f6 42. f5 ♗e5 43. ♖e7+
♗d6 44. f6 ♖b8 45. g5 ♖f8 46. ♗f4
c4 47. b×c4 b×c4 48. ♗f5 c3
49. ♖e3 1-0

Morphy was so far ahead of his time that this game would be a treasure even by modern-day standards!

Before leaving London for Paris, Morphy managed to set a new world's record, playing a simultaneous blind-fold exhibition in Birmingham against 8 players and scoring +6 -1 =1. A quick glance at the games shows that Morphy was very tired, for the quality of his play was considerably below that of the similar exhibition he gave in New Orleans before leaving for Europe.

In Paris, Morphy hoped to find worthy opposition, and did so in the person of Daniel Harrwitz, one of the strongest players of the day. That Morphy was fatigued is evident by the quality of the first games, beginning with an offhand game played before the match. This is affirmed by Morphy's secretary, Frederick Edge, who attributes Morphy's bad start in the match against Harrwitz simply to lack of sleep, because of the late hours Morphy kept while seeing the sights of Paris.

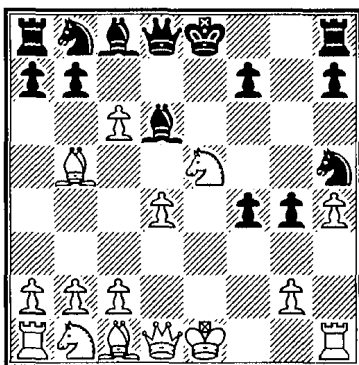
Harrwitz, D. - Morphy, P.

Paris, casual game, September 2, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.f4 e×f4 3.♘f3 g5 4.h4
g4 5.♘e5 ♘f6 6.♙c4 d5 7.e×d5
♙d6 8.d4 ♘h5 9.♙b5+ c6

This very strong move was a mistake in this instance, which we will explain below. The simple 9...♙f8 would have been acceptable.

10.d×c6



10...0-0??

This is a gross blunder. The correct move was seen five years later in Rosanes, J. - Anderssen, A., Breslau 1863, 10...b×c6! 11.♘×c6 ♘×c6 12.♙×c6+ ♙f8! And I will not deprive my readers of the pleasure of seeing this game to its end: 13.♙×a8 ♘g3 14.♖h2 ♙f5 15.♙d5 ♙g7 16.♘c3 ♖e8+ 17.♙f2 ♙b6 18.♘a4 ♙a6 19.♘c3 ♙e5!! 20.a4? ♙f1+!! 21.♙×f1 ♙×d4+ 22.♙e3 ♖×e3 23.♙g1 ♖e1#

Nearly every game played in this variation afterwards would end in Black's favor. So in criticizing Black's 9th move, I only mean to note that Morphy, who was improvising, evidently overlooked the check at move 12. This confirms

our opinion that he was in poor form – and further confirmation lies ahead.

11.c×b7 ♙×b7 12.♙×g4+ ♘g7
13.♙×f4 ♙b6 14.♘c3 ♙×e5

Taking the pawn is no fun for Black either: 14...♙×d4 15.♖d1 ♙b4 16.a3 ♙×b2 17.♖h3 ♙c8 18.♙g3 ♙×h3 19.♖×d6 with a winning position.

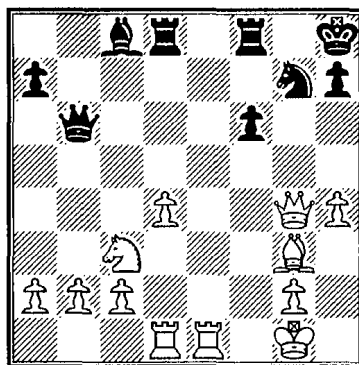
15.♙×e5 f6 16.♙g3 ♘a6 17.0-0?!

Long castling was unpopular with the players of that era, but in this position it would have been much safer for White.

17...♖ad8 18.♖ad1 ♙h8
19.♙×a6?!

Why give up such a promising bishop for such a pointless knight? 19.♙h2 was much more natural.

19...♙×a6 20.♖fe1 ♙c8?



An unfortunate choice; he should have just taken the pawn: 20...♙×b2 while attacking another. This would have reduced White's winning chances considerably.

21.♙f3 ♙b7 22.♙d3 ♖d7 23.♙b5
♙d8 24.d5 ♘f5 25.♙f2 ♖g8

26. ♖d3 ♜dg7 27. ♖xf5 ♜xg2+
28. ♜f1 ♙a6+ 29. ♜e2

The immediate 29. ♜d3 was better.

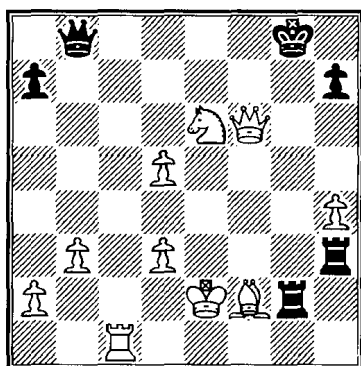
29... ♖d6 30. ♜d3 ♙x d3 31. cxd3
♜h2 32. ♜f4 ♜h1+ 33. ♜e2 ♜h2
34. ♜e6

34. ♜f3! was more forceful.

34... ♜g6 35. ♜c1 ♖b8 36. b3 ♜gg2
37. ♖xf6+ ♜g8 38. ♜e3

38. ♜d1! ♜h1+ 39. ♜d2 ♜hh2 40. ♜c3!
a5 41... ♙c5! was the most precise, and
wins.

38... ♜h3+ 39. ♜e2



39... ♜x f2+!

Avoiding the aforementioned
39... ♜hh2 40. ♜d1 line; White's inac-
curacies have allowed Morphy this
chance, literally out of nowhere. Un-
fortunately, it proved insufficient.

40. ♖xf2 ♜h2 41. ♜g1+ ♜h8
42. ♜g2 ♖e5+ 43. ♜f3!

The only winning move; lucky for
White he still had it.

43... ♖xd5+ 44. ♜g3 ♜xg2+

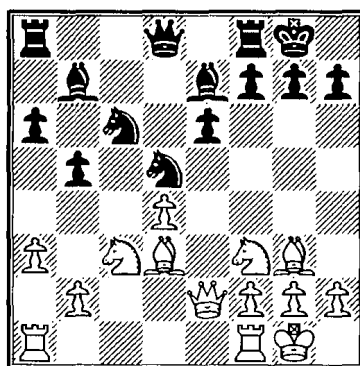
45. ♖xg2 ♖xe6 46. ♖a8+ ♜g7
47. ♖xa7+ 1-0

The match began three days later. The
first games showed that Morphy had
not completely regained his strength.
Additionally, another peculiarity of
Morphy's play emerged: he tended to
begin a match against a strong oppo-
nent uncertainly. Evidently he needed
to "feel out" his opponent.

Harrwitz, D. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (1) September 5, 1858

1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. ♜c3 ♜f6 4. ♙f4
a6 5. e3 c5 6. ♜f3 ♜c6 7. a3 cxd4
8. exd4 dxc4 9. ♙xc4 b5 10. ♙d3
♙b7 11. 0-0 ♙e7 12. ♙e5 0-0
13. ♖e2 ♜d5 14. ♙g3



White has no advantage from the open-
ing. After 14. ♖e4? f5 15. ♖e2 ♜xe5
16. ♖xe5 ♜f6 Black's position would
be somewhat superior. He would also
have a good position after 14. ♙e4
♜xe5 15. ♜xe5 ♜xc3 16. bxc3 ♙xe4
17. ♖xe4 ♜c8.

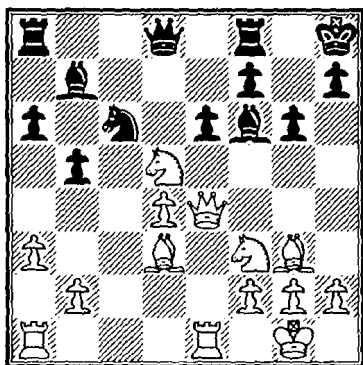
14... ♜h8

A strange move, after the normal
14... ♜c8! Black would have had good
play.

15. ♖fe1 ♕f6?!

This is another unfortunate choice. He should have played 15... ♖f6!? meeting 16. ♖ad1 with 16... b4.

16. ♖e4 g6 17. ♖x d5



17... ♖x d5!

Realizing his bad position, Morphy switches to defense. Retaining queens would have been good for White. After 17... exd5 18. ♖e3 ♖e8 19. ♖f4 he would have had pressure on the kingside, as well.

18. ♖x d5 exd5 19. ♖e5 ♖ad8?!

Still another inaccuracy; 19... ♖g7!? would have been much better; after 20. ♖xc6 (20. ♖d7 ♖fe8 =) 20... ♖xc6 White's advantage would have been minimal.

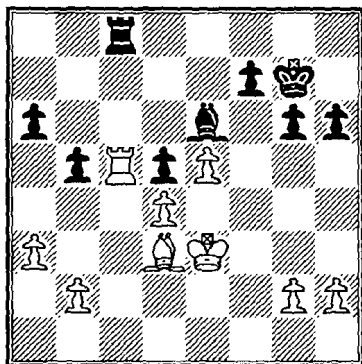
20. ♖xc6 ♖xc6 21. ♖ac1 ♖c8
22. ♖d6! ♖g8

22... ♖fd8 23. ♖e7 clearly favors White.

23. ♖e5 ♖g7 24. f4 ♖d7 25. ♖f2 h6 26. ♖e3 ♖xc1 27. ♖xc1 ♖c8
28. ♖c5!

Excellently played.

28... ♖xe5 29. fxe5 ♖e6



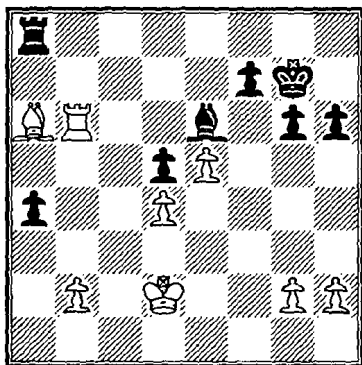
30. a4?

Having obtained a great advantage, Harrwitz commits a serious error. After 30. ♖d2! f6 31. exf6+ ♖xf6 32. ♖c3 g5 33. ♖xc8 ♖xc8 34. ♖b4 White obtains an overwhelming position.

30... bxa4 31. ♖xa6 ♖b8?

Black commits a serious error in return, which confirms our opinion of Morphy's poor form. After 31... ♖a8! 32. ♖b7 (32. ♖c6 ♖b8) 32... ♖b8 33. ♖c7 (33. ♖b5? ♖d7+) 33... g5 he obtains an equal game.

32. ♖b5! ♖d8 33. ♖b6 ♖a8 34. ♖d2



34... ♖c8!

Good or bad form is one thing – under-

standing the position is another! Morphy makes the only move that maintains hope of saving the game. Now his rook will be active.

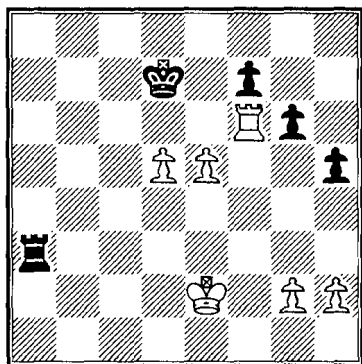
**35. ♖×c8 ♜×c8 36. ♜b5 ♜a8!
37. ♜×d5 a3 38. b×a3 ♜×a3 39. ♜c5
♜f8 40. ♜e2 ♜e7 41. d5 ♜d7
42. ♜c6?**

It is strange that White allows the opposing rook to occupy the 5th rank, when it's so important in this position. 42. ♜b5 ♜c7 43. ♜b2 h5 was correct, although here too, Black has hopes of salvation.

42...h5?!

It's also odd that Morphy fails to exploit his opponent's oversight. After the obvious 42... ♜a5 43. ♜d6+ ♜e7 it's hard to see how White could improve his position.

43. ♜f6?!



Tempting, but not best; he should have returned to the 5th rank with 43. ♜c5!?

43...♜e7?

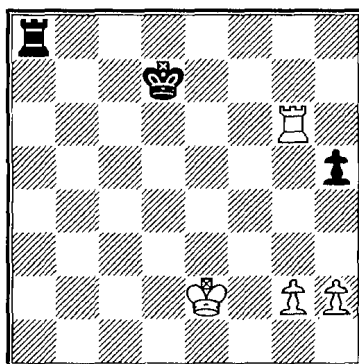
This error is decisive. 43... ♜e8 was much tougher, but 43... ♜a5! would

have been really good: 44. ♜e3 ♜×d5 45. ♜e4 ♜d2 46. ♜×f7+ ♜e8 47. ♜g7 ♜×g2 48. ♜d5 ♜f8.

44. d6+ ♜e8 45. e6 f×e6

Losing his last chance to lure the opponent into a trap: after 45... ♜a2+!? White should not continue 46. ♜f3? f×e6 47. ♜×e6+ ♜f7 48. ♜e7+ (48. d7 ♜d2 =) 48... ♜f6 49. ♜h7 ♜d2 50. d7 ♜d1 when there is no win in sight, but instead play 46. ♜e3! (keeping Black's rook off the d2-square) 46... f×e6 47. ♜×e6+ ♜d7 48. ♜×g6 h4 49. h3 winning.

**46. ♜×e6+ ♜f7 47. d7 ♜a8 48. ♜d6
♜e7 49. ♜×g6 ♜×d7**



50. ♜g5!

The only winning move: 50. ♜h6? ♜a5 51. ♜f3 ♜e7 52. ♜g3 ♜g5+! and a draw is likely; as it is after 50. h4? ♜e7 51. ♜g5 ♜h8 52. ♜f3 ♜f6 53. ♜f4 ♜f7! 54. ♜b5 (54. ♜f5 ♜h7 55. g3 ♜h8) 54... ♜g6 55. ♜b6+ ♜h7! 56. ♜g5 ♜g8+.

50...♜h8

Karsten Müller demonstrates that 50... h4 51. ♜f3 ♜a2 (after 51... h3 52. g4! ♜e6 53. ♜f5 ♜a3+ 54. ♜f2 or 51... ♜e6 52. ♜g4 ♜a4+ 53. ♜h3 ♜f6

54.♖g4 White also wins) 52.♞h5! ♞a4 53.♞e5! ♞a2 54.♞e2 ♞a4 55.♞e4 doesn't save Black, either.

51.♖f3 ♖e6 52.♖g3 h4+ 53.♖g4 h3

White also wins after 53...♖f6 54.♞h5 ♞g8+ 55.♖h3.

54.g3! ♖f6 55.♞h5 1-0

Doubtlessly Morphy was primed to take his revenge in the next game as White, but his exceptionally aggressive attitude didn't do him any favors.

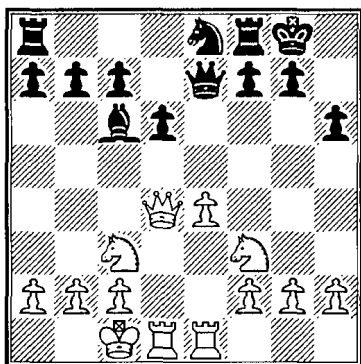
Morphy, P. - Harrwitz, D.

Match, Paris (2), September, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.♞xd4 ♟c6 5.♞b5 ♞d7 6.♞xc6 ♞xc6 7.♞g5 ♟f6 8.♟c3 ♞e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♞he1 h6 11.♞h4 ♟e8?!

This is weak; the usual move is 11...♞e8 followed by ...♟f6-d7.

12.♞xe7 ♞xe7



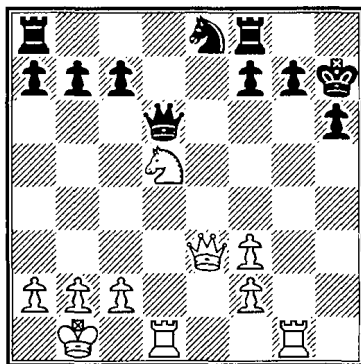
The opening has not gone well for Black as his position is cramped and his pieces are clumsily placed. In such cases, when there is no possibility of immediately forcing favorable changes,

the active side should prepare for dynamic operations so as to begin them under the most favorable circumstances. The point being that the opponent, who has less space and poorer piece coordination, will be unable to improve his position similarly. Therefore, White might have proceeded with 13.♞e3 ♖e6 14.h3 (or 13.♖b1 first); then, he could double his rooks on the e-file, or pull his queen back to e3. And inasmuch as Black couldn't bring his knight back to f6, for fear of e4-e5, he would have a hard time finding moves.

13.e5?

Instead, Morphy removes all the disadvantages of his opponent's position. The reason for this decision is easy to see after looking at his play in the preceding games. Evidently, he was relying on his advantage in development, and according to tradition, strove to open the game. In the heat of vendetta, Morphy failed to notice that this would lead to unfavorable exchanges and that it would also remove the pieces necessary for the attack.

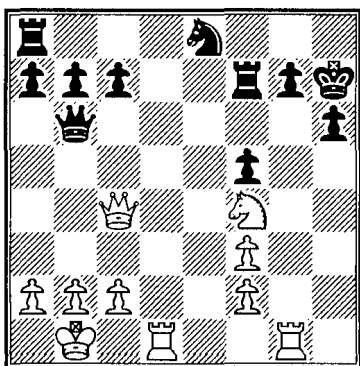
13...♞xf3 14.gxf3 ♞g5+ 15.♖b1 dxe5 16.♞xe5 ♞g2 17.♟d5 ♞xh2 18.♞ee1!? ♞d6 19.♞g1 ♖h7 20.♞e3



20...f5?

This leads to unnecessary weaknesses. The last seven moves have changed the position in Black's favor. He has an extra pawn with a completely sound position; if he had played 20...♖f6!? then the chances would have been equal after 21.♗e7 ♜e6 22.♝d3+ ♜h8 23.♗f5.

**21.♗f4 ♜b6 22.♝e2 ♜f7
23.♝c4?!**

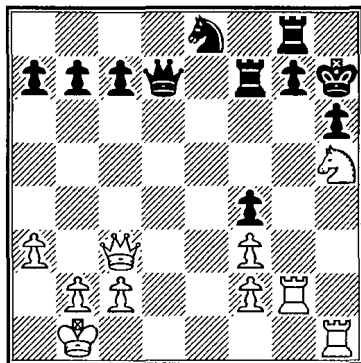


Morphy misses the advantage he could have obtained with 23.♗e6! ♗f6 (on 23...♗d6 White would force Black to retreat by 24.♝e5 and after 24...♗e8 he develops a dangerous initiative with 25.c4) 24.♝e5 g6. Now the tempting: a) 25.♝xg6 ♜xg6 26.♝g1+ ♜h7 27.♝xf5+ ♜h8 28.♝g6 leads only to a draw after 28...♝d6! (but not 28...♝xf2? 29.♝xh6+ ♗h7 30.♝e5+) 29.♝xh6+ ♗h7 30.♝xh7+ ♝xh7 31.♝f6+ ♜g8 32.♝g6+ ♜h8 33.♝f6+. However, the correct: b) 25.♗d8! ♝g7 26.♝ge1! (otherwise 26...♗d7) gives White a strong initiative. Black has a hard game to play here.

**23...♝f6 24.♗h5 ♝e7 25.♝de1
♝d7 26.a3 ♗d6 27.♝d4 ♝g8
28.♝g2**

On 28.♝xa7 b6 29.♝a6 ♝b5 Black has the better chances.

28...♗e8 29.♝c3 f4 30.♝h1?



And in conclusion, a terrible blunder! According to analysis by R. Knaak, 30.♝g4 ♝gf8 31.♝xe8 ♝xe8 32.♝xg7+ ♝xg7 33.♗f6+ ♜g6 34.♗xd7 ♝xd7 35.♝b4 would lead to equality. But now, the game ends at once.

**30...g6 31.♝hg1 ♝d5 32.♝e1
♝xh5 33.♝g5 ♝xf3 34.♝e6 ♝f6
35.♝e7+ ♝g7 36.♝xe8 hxg5
37.♝e1 ♝c6 0-1**

And so, Morphy's acquaintance with Harrwitz began with three straight losses! Such an occurrence will always have a considerable effect upon the sufferer. However, the effect of these losses ended up being useful to Morphy as the further course of events testifies. The accumulated mass of disappointments grew to critical mass; and Morphy, I am convinced, finally had to give serious pause for reflection. This resulted in his *turning a quantity into something of quality*. Beginning with the very next game, his play began to change. He played a more varied style of game, indicating that he had absorbed the lessons the Europeans had

taught him. And since he was, in fact, a genius, he was quickly able to surpass his teachers.

Let's look at the next game of this match.

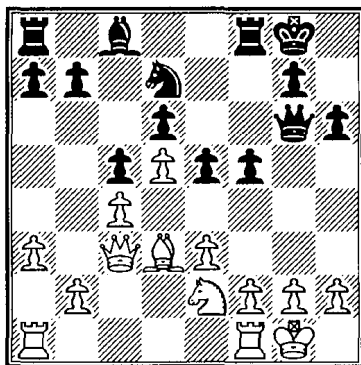
Harrwitz, D. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (3) September, 1858

1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5
♙b4 5.♜b3 c5 6.d5 e5 7.e3 0-0
8.♙d3 d6 9.♘ge2 h6 10.♙xf6
♜xf6 11.a3 ♙xc3+

This exchange isn't bad, but I would prefer to retain the bishop with 11...♙a5!? Such a decision, however, was contrary to Morphy's concept of chess.

12.♜xc3 ♜g6 13.0-0 ♘d7



There is some disparity regarding the move order here. Some sources show it as 12.♜xc3 ♘d7 13.0-0 ♜g6 but I am inclined to disbelieve this because it would mean that Morphy, who always strove for open piece play, missed an opportunity to seize more space for his pieces with 13...f4 14.♙e4 ♜g5 and about an even game.

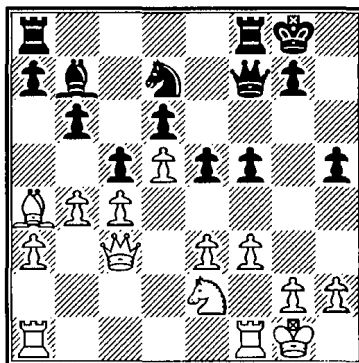
14.b4 b6 15.f3 h5

This move continues the plan begun with his 12th move.

16.♙c2 ♙b7?!

Black's bishop stands better on its "home" diagonal than on any other. The correct continuation was 16...h4!? followed by 17...♘f6. Nowadays, this is easily verified by examining a few hundred games from one's database.

17.♙a4 ♜f7



18.♙xd7?

Harrwitz commits a serious positional error in return; without justification, he gives up his excellent bishop for the quite nondescript black knight. Meanwhile, he's left with a rather pointless knight. Clearly, this exchange is not good for White! 18.♙c6!? increasing the pressure, looked strong and Black would have had a more difficult time of it.

18...♜xd7 19.bxc5?!

White needs the b-pawn to restrict the mobility of the black bishop. So it was better not to exchange it and play 19.f4!? e4 20.♙fb1 at once.

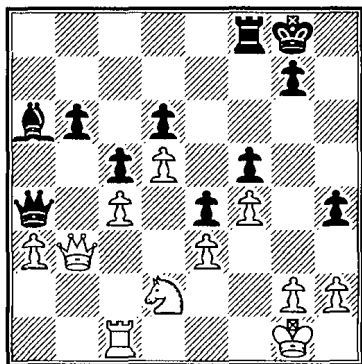
19...bxc5 20.f4 e4 21.♙ab1

In the line suggested by Knaak:
21.♖a5!? ♜d8 22.♖a4 Black gets an even game by 22...♜e8.

21...♙a6 22.♞fc1?!

This is bad; it was important to control the a4-square: 22.♜c2 ♞ab8 23.♙g3!? h4 24.♙h1 ♜c7 25.♖a4 ♞b6 26.♞×b6 ♜×b6 27.♙f2 gives an unclear game with chances for both sides.

22...♖a4 23.♙g3 h4 24.♙f1 ♞ab8 25.♙d2 ♞b6! 26.♞×b6 a×b6 27.♖b3?



This is the decisive error. After the exchange of queens White can no longer create enough counterplay to compensate for his pawn weaknesses. The correct line was 27.♞b1 b5 28.g4!? h×g3 29.h×g3 ♞b8 30.g4 with counterplay.

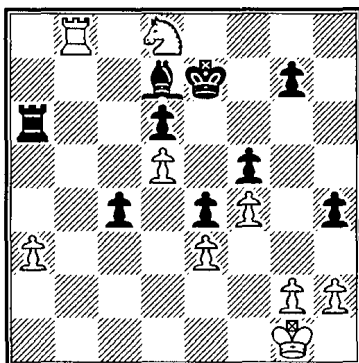
27...♜×b3 28.♙×b3 b5 29.c×b5

29.♙d2 b×c4 30.♙×c4 ♙×c4 31.♞×c4 ♞b8 32.♞c1! was considerably tougher; but even then, after 32...♞b3 33.♞a1 ♞×e3 34.a4 ♞b3 35.a5 ♞b7 36.a6 ♞a7 Black would have had real winning chances.

29...♙×b5 30.♙a5

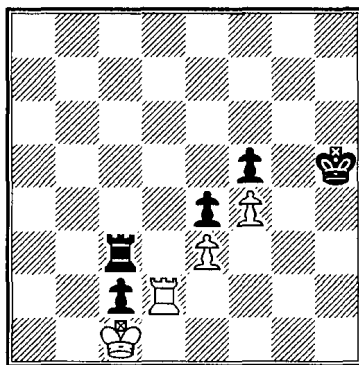
30.♙d2 ♙d3 31.♙c4 ♙×c4 32.♞×c4 ♞b8 transposes to the variation above.

30...♞a8 31.♙b7 ♞a6 32.♞c3 ♜f8 33.♙d8 ♙d7 34.♞b3 ♜e7 35.♞b8 c4!



Morphy efficiently converts this endgame to a win.

36.♜f2 c3 37.♜e2 ♞×a3 38.♙c6+ ♙×c6 39.d×c6 c2 40.♜d2 ♞c3 41.♜c1 ♞×c6 42.♞b3 ♜f6 43.♞a3 g5 44.g3 h×g3 45.h×g3 g×f4 46.g×f4 ♜g6 47.♞a5 ♞c5 48.♞a6 ♞c3 49.♞×d6+ ♜h5 50.♞d2



50...♜g4! 51.♞g2+ ♜f3 52.♞g5 ♞c5 53.♞h5 ♜×e3 54.♞h4 ♜f3 0-1

And so Morphy scored his first victory – although not without some help from his opponent. This undoubtedly boosted his confidence and he played

the next game *en avant*, or “marching forward.” This led to the creation of yet another “Morphy masterpiece.”

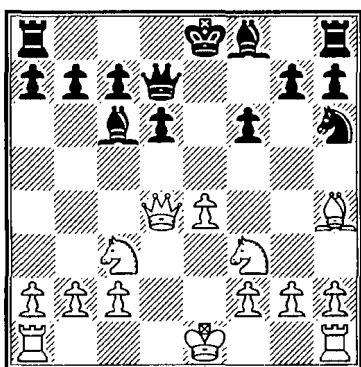
Morphy, P. - Harrwitz, D.

Match, Paris (4) September, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 exd4
4.♙xd4 ♘c6 5.♙b5 ♙d7 6.♙xc6
♙xc6 7.♙g5 f6 8.♙h4 ♘h6

This was previously played in
Löwenthal – Harrwitz, London 1853.

9.♘c3 ♙d7



10.0-0 ♙e7 11.♙ad1 0-0 12.♙c4+
♙f7

Black plays this game very creatively.
He plans ...g7-g5-♙g7, and attempts
to provoke his young opponent into a
tempting breakthrough.

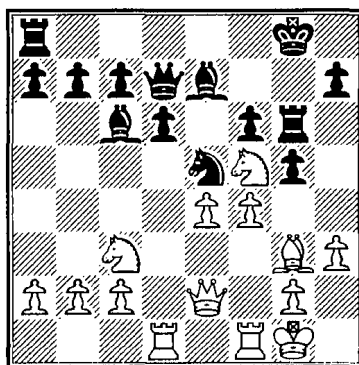
13.♘d4

Morphy avoids the trap! In the event
of 13.e5 ♙g4 14.♙d4 ♙g6 15.e6 ♙ff8
16.♘d5 ♙xd5 17.♙xd5 c6 18.♙d3 ♘f5
the game is level.

13...♘g4 14.h3 ♘e5 15.♙e2 g5?

Harrwitz continues with his plan, but
this simply weakens his position.

16.♙g3 ♙g7 17.♘f5 ♙g6 18.f4!



This is a strong move that opens the f-
file and quickly mobilizes White’s
forces.

18...gxf4 19.♙xf4 ♙h8 20.♙h4!

Now if 20...♙ag8?? then 21.♙xh7+
♙xh7 22.♙h5+.

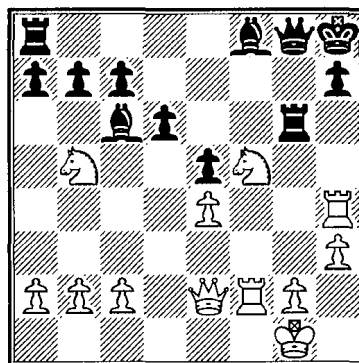
20...♙f8 21.♙xe5!

This is another strong move, opening
files for his pieces and eliminating the
annoying black knight.

21...fxe5 22.♙f1 ♙e6 23.♘b5!
♙g8?!

Better is 23...♙d7 although after 24.c4
a6 25.♘c3 White is clearly better.

24.♙f2!



Morphy neutralizes Black's counterplay on the g-file. Upon 24. ♖xc7 ♜c8 25. ♜d5 ♜b5! Black's bishop would be untouchable: 26. ♗xb5? ♜xg2+ 27. ♖h1 ♜h2+ 28. ♖xh2 ♜xc2+ 29. ♖h1 ♗g2#

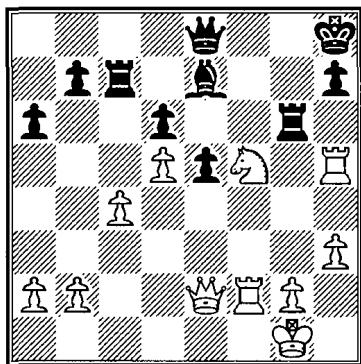
24...a6?!

This loses a pawn but Black's other choices were also inferior: a) 24...d5 25. exd5 ♜xb5 26. ♗xb5 ♜d8 (26...a6 27. ♗a5 b6 28. ♗c3 ♜e8 29. ♖h1!) 27. d6! ♜xd6 28. ♜h6 ♗e8 29. ♜f7+ ♖g7 30. ♜xd6 cxd6 31. ♗xb7+; b) White is also much better after 24...♜xb5 25. ♗xb5.

25. ♖xc7 ♜c8 26. ♜d5 ♜xd5 27. exd5 ♜c7

Only here did Harrwitz realize that 27...♗xd5 loses to 28. ♜xh7+! ♖xh7 29. ♗h5+ ♜h6 30. ♜e7! ♗e6 31. ♜xg6 ♖g7 32. ♜h4.

28. c4 ♜e7 29. ♜h5 ♗e8?!



Far more stubborn was 29...♜f8 although White still dominates. Yet the move played allows us the opportunity to see a fine combination.

30. c5!! ♜xc5 31. ♜xh7+ ♖xh7

32. ♗h5+ ♖g8 33. ♜xe7+ ♖g7 34. ♜f5+! ♖g8 35. ♜xd6 1-0

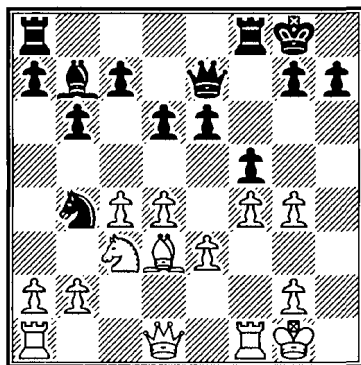
This is one of my favorite games in all of chess history.

Morphy was also successful in the next game:

Harrwitz, D. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (5) September, 1858

1. d4 f5 2. c4 e6 3. ♜c3 ♜f6 4. ♜g5 ♜e7 5. e3 0-0 6. ♜d3 b6 7. ♜ge2 ♜b7 8. 0-0 ♜h5 9. ♜xe7 ♗xe7 10. ♜g3!? ♜xg3 11. hxg3 d6 12. f4 ♜c6 13. g4 ♜b4



14. gxf5?!

A very dubious decision from a positional standpoint; White opens a line for his opponent, upon which he has a backward pawn. Moreover, this line holds the support point for Black's pieces. It would have been better, therefore, just to retreat with 14. ♜e2 or 14. ♜b1.

14...exf5 15. ♗d2 ♜ae8 16. ♜ae1 ♗h4?

The plan initiated by this move looks dubious as Black is surrendering the

center to his opponent. 16...♖xd3 17.♗xd3 ♕e4 would have been simple and strong with somewhat better chances for Black.

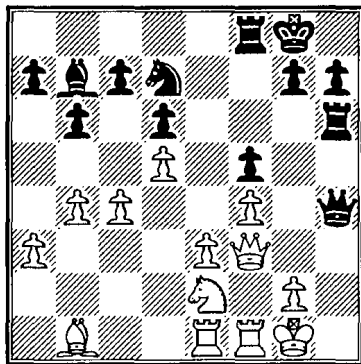
17.♖b1 ♖e6 18.♗f2!

18.♖b5?? ♕xg2+ would be a rank blunder; and 18.a3 ♖h6 19.d5 ♗h2+ 20.♗f2 ♖g6 21.♖g1 ♖a6 22.b4 would lead to an unclear position with chances for both sides.

18...♗h5 19.d5 ♖h6 20.♗f3 ♗h4

White retains a small advantage after 20...♗h2+ 21.♗f2 ♗h4+ 22.♗g3 ♗f6 23.♖h1.

21.a3 ♖a6 22.b4 ♖b8 23.♖e2 ♖d7



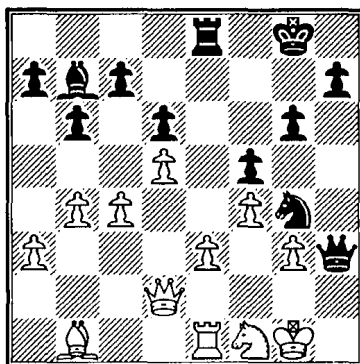
A conflict arises between the dynamic and the static elements of the position. As always, Morphy pays more attention to the former by rapidly developing a piece. Yet he should have first considered controlling the important d4-square with 23...c5?

24.♖g3?!

White errs immediately! As a consequence, Black will be allowed a con-

venient restructuring of his forces, and his unfortunately posted rook will be exchanged. Instead, 24.♖d4!? g6 (after 24...♖h5?! 25.♗h3! White would have a clear advantage) 25.♖e6 looked good, with advantage to White. Still better, however, was 24.♗g3!? ♗h5 25.♖d4 ♖g6 26.♗f3.

24...g6 25.♗f2 ♖f6 26.♖h1 ♖g4+ 27.♗g1 ♗f6 28.♖xh6 ♖xh6 29.♗d1 ♖g4 30.♗d2 ♗h4 31.♖f1 ♖e8 32.g3 ♗h3?!

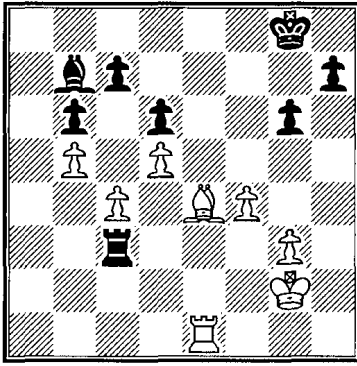


Having successfully avoided the worst, Black once again sends his queen on a kingside mission, although the preceding play should have warned him against it! 32...♗f6 would have been much better, when Black's chances are no worse.

33.b5!

It's amazing how the mistakes come in pairs in this match! No sooner does one side err than the other replies in kind. The obvious 33.e4! would have given White an indisputable advantage.

33...♖f6 34.♗g2 ♗xg2+ 35.♗xg2 a6 36.a4 axb5 37.axb5 ♖a8 38.♖d2 ♖a3 39.e4 fxe4 40.♖xe4 ♖xe4 41.♖xe4 ♖c3?!

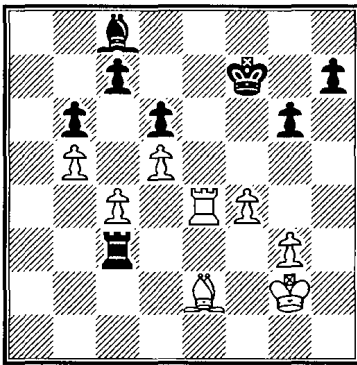


The resulting endgame is equal, with White's spatial advantage compensating for the shortcomings of his pawn structure; while Black must pay attention to his offside bishop. After the proper 41...♙f7 42.♙f3 h5 43.g4 h4! 44.♙h1 ♖a2+ 45.♙g1 ♖c2 46.♙xh4 ♙g7 the game should have ended in a draw.

42.♙f3 ♙f7 43.♙e4?

White misses a chance to complicate matters with 43..♙e2! ♖c2 44.♙f3 ♙c8 45.♙a1 although even then, after 45...h5 46.♙e3 ♖c3+ Black would have chances to hold the balance.

43...♙c8 44.♙e2?



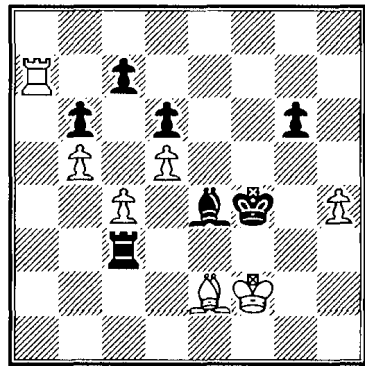
This move costs Harrwitz the game. Once Black's bishop comes back into play, all of White's pawn weaknesses

will tell. So 44.g4 was absolutely necessary, after which Black would have been unable to improve his position.

44...♙f5 45.♙d4 h5 46.♙f2 ♙f6 47.♙d2 ♙c2 48.♙e1 ♙e4 49.♙f2 ♙f5 50.♙a2

Black would also have had a great advantage after 50.♙d1 h4 51.gxh4 ♙xh4 52.♙g1 ♙h3 53.♙g4+ ♙f5 54.♙g5+ ♙f6.

50...h4 51.gxh4 ♙xh4 52.♙a7



White could have put up stiffer resistance with 52.♙a8. Then Black would have to find 52...♙h3 53.♙f8+ ♙f5 54.♙f1 ♙xh4 55.♙f7 ♙h2+ 56.♙g2 g5! 57.♙g1 ♙h7 to maintain a winning position.

52...♙h3 53.♙xc7

53.♙e1 would have held out longer, but it also would not have changed the outcome.

53...♙h2+ 54.♙e1 ♙e3 0-1

Perhaps after considering the course of the last game, Morphy consciously played simpler and more sedately in the next game.

Morphy, P. - Harrwitz, D.

Match, Paris (6) September 23, 1858

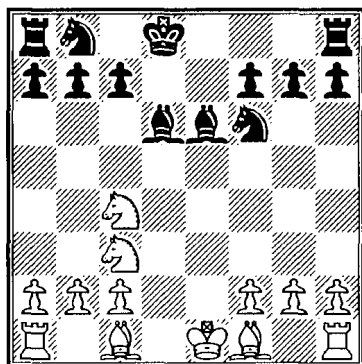
**1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 d6 3.d4 exd4
4.♞xd4 ♟f6 5.e5**

A surprise! Morphy deliberately plays for simplifications. 5.♟c3 is seen more frequently in this position.

**5...dxe5 6.♞xd8+ ♜xd8 7.♟xe5
♞e6 8.♟c3 ♞d6**

8...♟bd7 was better; but White still retains a minimal initiative with 9.♟xd7 ♟xd7 10.♞f4. Here it is important that after 10...♞b4 11.0-0-0 ♞xc3 12.bxc3 ♞xa2? loses to 13.c4 ♞e8 14.♞b2 ♞e4 15.♞g5+ f6 16.♞d3 (although Black has the stronger 12...♞c8!? with roughly equal chances).

9.♟c4



9...♞xc4?!

In that era bishops were not valued as highly as they are now. 9...♞b4!? 10.♞d2 ♟bd7 11.0-0-0 was much better, with a small but long-lasting advantage to White.

10.♞xc4 ♞e8+ 11.♞e3!? ♜e7?!

For the same reason, Black should not have left his opponent with the two

bishops. After 11...♟g4 12.0-0-0 ♟xe3 13.fxe3 ♞xe3 14.♞xf7 ♟d7 15.♞hf1 White would have had an initiative, but perhaps Black could have neutralized it.

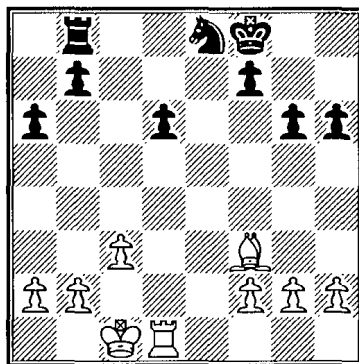
**12.0-0-0 a6 13.♞g5 ♟bd7
14.♟e4 h6**

Black is also in a bad way after 14...♞e5 15.f4 ♞xf4+ 16.♞xf4 ♟xe4 17.♞he1 f5 18.g4! g6 19.gxf5 gxf5 20.♞g1.

15.♞xf6+?!

For the second time in this game a player voluntarily parts with the bishop pair. I am amazed that the importance of this aspect was ignored in those days. A continuation obvious to any amateur today: 15.♟xd6 cxd6 16.♞h4, would have given White a very serious advantage.

**15...♟xf6 16.♟xd6 cxd6
17.♞he1+ ♜f8 18.♞xc8+ ♟xe8
19.♞d5 ♞b8 20.♞f3 g6 21.c3!?**



This "unassuming" move begins an original and strong plan of attack on the weakened enemy queenside.

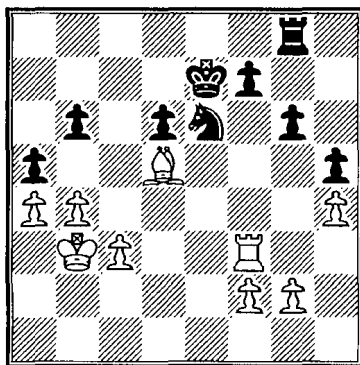
**21...♜e7 22.♞e1+! ♜f8 23.♜c2
♟c7 24.♞b3!? ♟e6 25.♜a4 b6**

The game develops similarly after 25...♗c5+ 26.♕a3 b6 27.♞d1 ♖e7 28.b4.

26.b4 h5 27.h4! ♖e7 28.♞e3!

Morphy plays it all “by the book.” The rook advances to gain maneuvering room, which in this position lies along the third rank.

28...♗d7 29.♙d5 ♞e8 30.♕b3 ♞g8 31.♞f3 ♖e7 32.a4 a5?



This gives White an invasion square within the black camp. Black should have tried 32...g5 33.♞g3 g4 34.♞e3 although White still retains the upper hand.

33.♙x e6!

One is immediately reminded of the words of Capablanca, who is quoted by Kasparov in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on page 43 as saying, “Morphy gained most of his wins by playing directly and simply...” Capablanca himself approached the game quite similarly, as did Fischer!

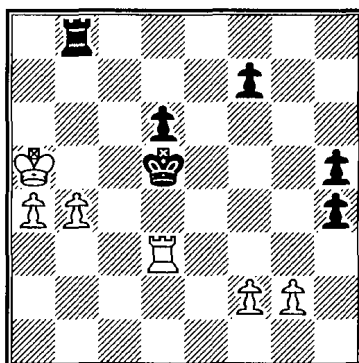
The point to Morphy’s decision is seen in the variation 33.♗c4 ♞c8+ 34.♕b5 ♗c7+ 35.♗c6 ♗d5+ 36.♗d5 a×b4

37.c×b4 ♞c2 when the white king is driven away from the queenside and the black rook becomes active.

33...♕×e6

The other capture 33...f×e6 was more stubborn. But after 34.♗c4 g5 35.♕b5! g×h4 36.♕×b6 a×b4 37.c×b4 ♞b8+ 38.♗a5 ♞a8+ 39.♕b5 ♞b8+ 40.♗c4 d5+ (the reason for capturing with the pawn) 41.♕b3! ♞g8 42.a5 ♗d6 43.♗a4 ♞×g2 44.a6 White would also have had good winning chances.

34.♗c4 g5 35.♕b5! a×b4 36.c×b4 g×h4 37.♕×b6 ♞b8+ 38.♗a5 ♗d5 39.♞d3+!



Morphy chooses the most direct method to win.

39...♗c4 40.♞×d6 ♞×b4 41.♞d4+ ♕×d4 42.♕×b4 f5 43.f4

This move wasn’t necessary, but Morphy was sometimes prone to carelessness in a winning position. Perhaps he didn’t want to calculate the variation 43.a5 f4 44.a6 f3 45.g×f3 h3 46.a7 h2 47.a8♖ h1♖ 48.♖e4 mate.

43...♕e3 44.a5 ♕f2 45.a6 ♕×g2 46.a7 h3 47.a8♖+ ♕g1 48.♖f3 1-0

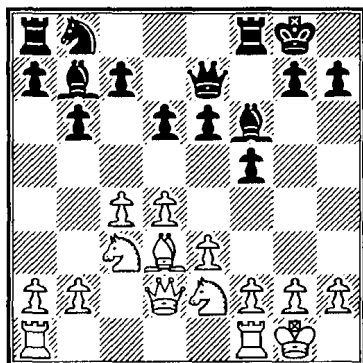
Harrwitz, D. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (7) September 29, 1858

1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6 3.♟c3 ♟f6 4.♞g5
♞e7 5.e3 0-0 6.♞d3 b6 7.♟ge2
♞b7 8.♞xf6

Harrwitz has a new plan in mind and
varies from 8.0-0 ♜e7 10.♜d2 d6

8...♞xf6 9.0-0 ♜e7 10.♜d2 d6



11.f4!

The immediate 11.e4 would have been
inferior because of 11...f4!

11...c5 12.d5 ♟a6 13.dxe6 ♜xe6
14.♞ae1 ♞h4 15.♟g3 ♜g6?

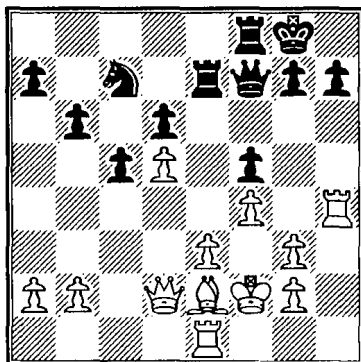
With this unfortunate move, Morphy
overestimates the power of his own
threats and underestimates the impor-
tance of central play. He had to con-
tinue 15...♟b4 16.♞b1 ♞xg3 17.hxg3
♞ad8 with a good position.

16.♟d5?

Harrwitz commits a grave positional
error, radically altering the pawn struc-
ture in Black's favor. The assessment
of the position alters just as sharply,
with the advantage going to Black. Af-

ter the correct 16.e4! ♞xg3 17.hxg3
♜xg3 18.exf5 ♟b4 19.♞b1! White's
advantage would have been consider-
able.

16...♞xd5 17.cxd5 ♞xg3 18.hxg3
♟c7 19.♜f2 ♞ae8 20.♞h1 ♞e7
21.♞h4 ♜f7! 22.♞e2



22.g4 would have been met with
22...♜xd5.

22...♟e8!

The knight relocates to the center.
Morphy plays excellently from this
point, but falters at the end.

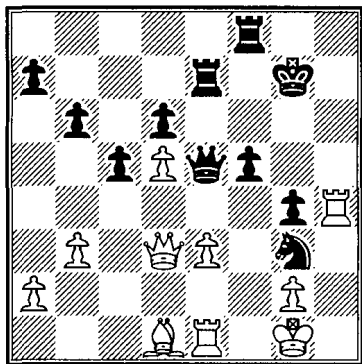
23.♜d3 ♟f6 24.♞f3 g6 25.♞e2
♞fe8 26.b3 ♜g7!

Black prepares a pawn assault on the
kingside, which will be very strong in
this position.

27.♞h1 h6! 28.♜g1 g5 29.fxg5
hxg5 30.♞h5 ♟e4! 31.♞e1

31.♞xe8? ♜a1+ 32.♜h2 ♞h7+ would
lose on the spot.

31...♞f8 32.♞f3 ♟xg3 33.♞h3
♜e5 34.♞h6 g4 35.♞d1 ♜g7
36.♞h4



36...Rf8!

With this exchange, Black seizes the file for his rook.

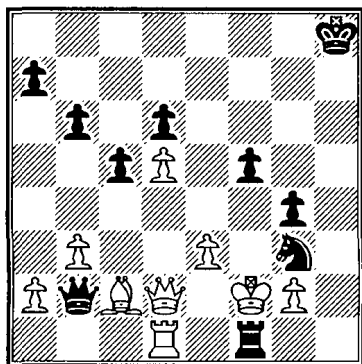
37.Rxh8 Qxh8 38.Qc2 Rh7 39.Qd2 Qb2

This was not the strongest move, nor was 39...Rh1+ 40.Qf2 Qe4+ 41.Qxe4 g3+ 42.Qe2 Qxe4??, because of 43.Rxh1+; but the preparatory 39...Qg8! 40.Qb1 and now 40...Rh1+ 41.Qf2 Qe4+ 42.Qxe4 g3+ 43.Qe2 Qxe4! would win easily.

40.Rd1 Rh1+?!

This check is also inaccurate, but easily remedied. What is far worse is the rank blunder it prepares.

41.Qf2 Rf1+?



Black's previous inaccuracies hadn't spoiled anything yet; and he could have maintained his winning position with 41...Rxd1 42.Qxd1 Qe5 43.Qd3 Qg7 or 41...Qe5.

42.Qxg3 Qe5+ 43.Qh4 Qf6+ 44.Qg3 Qe5+ 45.Qh4 Qf6+ 1/2-1/2

An unfortunate lapse; after White's mistake on move 16, Morphy had played excellently.

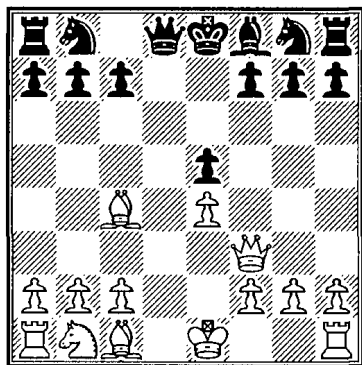
Morphy, P. - Harrwitz, D.

Match, Paris (8) September, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 Qg4?

This move leads to difficulties for Black.

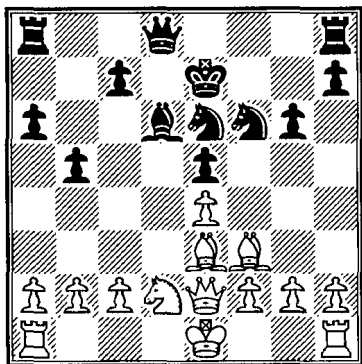
4.dxe5 Qxf3 5.Qxf3 dxe5 6.Qc4



6...Qf6??

But this is a gross blunder. Obviously, Harrwitz was quite shaken by the turnaround in the match. Here, 6...Qd7 would have been better.

7.Qb3 Qd6 8.Qxf7+ Qf8 9.Qg5 Qbd7 10.Qh5 g6 11.Qh6+ Qe7 12.Qf3 Qc5 13.Qc4 b5 14.Qe2 Qe6 15.Qe3 a6 16.Qd2!?



White had several paths he could have taken, and the one chosen by Morphy was formerly uncharacteristic. First, he develops the knight to an unusual square, one which does not aim to control d5. Second, he prepares to castle long, instead of castling short which would have been best prepared by c2-c3. Objectively, there is some justification since White can then make use of his pawn majority on the kingside, but White's king will not feel as safe on the queenside. In his earlier games, as we have seen, Morphy did not employ such widely varying strategies.

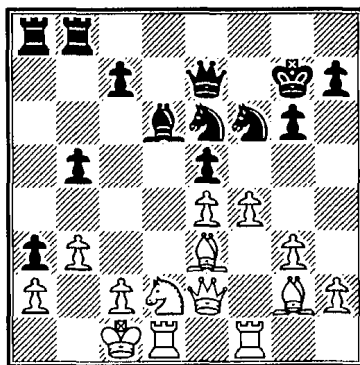
There is another important aspect of Morphy's play that we have previously only alluded to, his purposeful play in pursuit of his plans. With his last move, he begins the execution of a plan which will be crowned by the win of material on the 31st move. This is by no means an accidental episode; there was hardly anyone who played so methodically in those days, except perhaps Staunton.

16... ♖f7 17.0-0-0!? ♜e7 18.g3 ♜h8?!

Black will get very little use out of this move. 18... ♖c5 looks better; or perhaps 18... ♜hd8; he might also have sharp-

ened the game with 18...c5 19. ♖g2 ♖d4 20. ♜f1 c4 (20... ♜hc8 does nothing: 21.c3 b4 22. ♖c4 with a winning position. And 20... ♖g4 21.h3! was bad as well), although after 21. ♖xd4 exd4 22.e5 ♖xe5 23. ♖xa8 ♜xa8 24. ♖f3 White must eventually win.

19. ♖g2 a5 20. ♜hf1 a4 21.f4 a3 22.b3 ♜g7



23.f5

Morphy's plan, begun on the 16th move, is successfully executed. Black can no longer resist White's onslaught.

23... ♖f8

Passive play; but after 23... ♖d4 24. ♖xd4 exd4 25.e5 d3!? 26. ♜xd3 ♜xe5 27.c3 ♜a6 28. ♖de1 ♜c5 29.fxg6 White also gains a decisive advantage.

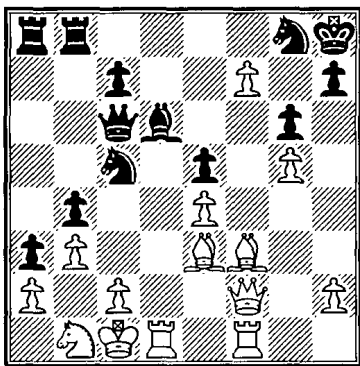
24.g4 ♜e8 25. ♖f3 ♜c6 26. ♖b1!

Correct! The weakest piece defends, leaving the stronger pieces free to attack.

26...b4 27. ♜f2 ♖8d7 28.g5 ♖g8

28... ♖xe4 would lose a piece to 29.f6+ ♜h8 30. ♜g2 ♖c5 31. ♜fe1!

29.f6+ ♖h8 30.f7 ♘c5



30...♗e7 31.♗g4 would be hopeless as well. The rest is no longer interesting.

31.f×g8♖+ ♖×g8 32.♗×c5 ♗×c5
33.♖e2 ♖e6 34.♘d2 ♖h8
35.♗g4 ♖e7 36.♘f3 ♗d8 37.h4
♗d6 38.♗×d6 c×d6 39.♖c4 ♗f8
40.♖e6 ♗e3+ 41.♖d1 ♖c7
42.♘d2 ♗f4 43.♘c4 ♖c5 44.♖d5
♖×d5+ 45.e×d5 ♗d8 46.♗f3 ♖g7
47.c3 ♗b8 48.c×b4 ♗×b4 49.♖c2
♖f8 50.♖c3 ♗b5 51.♗e6 ♗c5
52.b4 ♗c7 53.b5 ♖e7 54.b6 ♗b7
55.♗c8 ♗b8 56.b7 ♖d8 57.♘×d6
♖e7 58.♘b5 h6 59.d6+ 1-0

This game is of interest to us because of the confidence with which Morphy snuffed out his opponent's initiative, and the wide-ranging and flexible manner in which he played – traits that he certainly had not displayed previously. Despite Harrwitz's weak resistance, this game is a worthy garland to a match in which Morphy showed an enormous leap of quality in his play. Notwithstanding Morphy's initial stumbles, this match was a great creative achievement and an important stage in his development as a chessplayer.

Additionally, the above contest was

excellent training for Morphy prior to his match against Adolf Anderssen, which was the pinnacle of Morphy's career. However, before reflecting on this match, I simply must show one of the most elegant games in all of chess history – especially when it is hereditarily linked to the last game and chronologically lies between these matches. To exclude the following game is beyond my strength!

*Morphy, P. - Duke of Brunswick & Count Isouard de Vauvenargue
Consultation Game, Paris 1858*

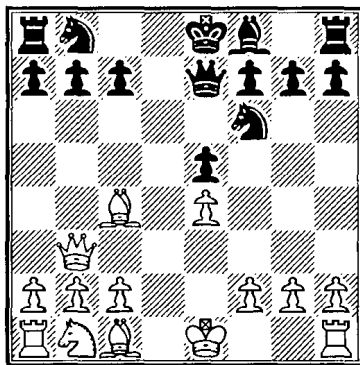
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 ♗g4?!

We know this one!

4.d×e5 ♗×f3 5.♖×f3 d×e5 6.♗c4
♘f6?

This also occurred in the Harrwitz game, played two months previously. Unfortunately for Morphy's high-born opponents there was no "Chessbase" to consult beforehand!

7.♖b3 ♖e7

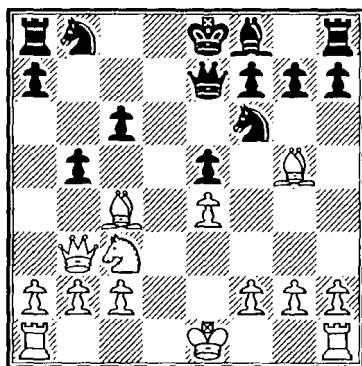


Harrwitz played the somewhat stronger 7...♗d6 to keep the game complicated.

8. ♖c3!?

The greedy 8. ♖x f7+ ♜x f7 9. ♜x b7 would force White to consider the complexities of 9... ♖c5 10. 0-0 (or 10. ♜x a8 ♖x f2+ 11. ♜x f2 ♘x e4+ 12. ♜e1 ♜f2+ 13. ♜d1 ♜x g2 14. ♜x b8+ ♜f7) 10... 0-0 11. ♜x a8 c6, but who needs that when you're sitting in a box at the Paris Opera! White could have reached a technically winning position after 8. ♜x b7 ♜b4+ 9. ♜x b4; which perhaps, in other circumstances, Morphy would have played.

8... c6 9. ♖g5 b5?



Seriously behind in development, Black doesn't develop his pieces and erroneously pushes pawns instead. 9... ♜c7 was correct.

10. ♖x b5!

"Morphy's pieces never retreat!" To retreat in such a position would mean justifying, in some measure, Black's preceding actions and this is contrary to the logic of the position.

10... c x b5

After this capture, everything is forced. Giving check on b4 would have been

far better, forcing White to retreat his knight to c3, but White would still be technically winning.

11. ♖x b5+ ♘bd7 12. 0-0-0 ♖d8

Had Black castled, he would have been mated in a few moves.

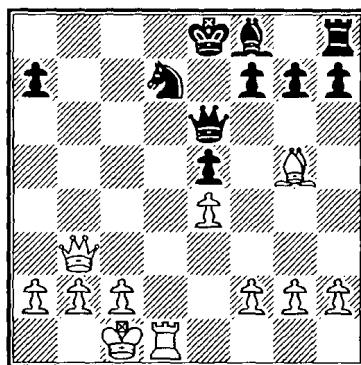
13. ♖x d7!

The point of this sacrifice is quite simple. On the next move, White temporarily obtains a decisive material advantage in the only important area of the board. This is the dynamic of chess – everything is evaluated in motion and everything changes instantly!

13... ♖x d7 14. ♖d1 ♜e6 15. ♖x d7+!

Technically winning lines such as 15. ♜x e6+ f x e6 16. ♖x f6 or 15... ♖x f6 g x f6 16. ♖x d7+ would be incongruous here.

15... ♖x d7



16. ♜b8+!! ♖x b8 17. ♖d8 mate

This elegant and spectacular game is one of the greatest examples of the principles of development, initiative, and

the coordination of pieces; all those elements that constitute chess dynamics.

Next Morphy was to meet Adolf Anderssen, a professor of mathematics and the undisputed number one of the chess world. Morphy even used the stakes from his match against Harrwitz to help defray Anderssen's traveling expenses from Breslau to Paris during the Christmas holidays of 1858.

Anderssen was a very important figure in the history of world chess and his impact on the development of chess was enormous. For all my reverence for the genius of Paul Morphy, without Anderssen's influence, the chess development in the 19th century would have been significantly altered. Play would have been duller and of a lower overall level.

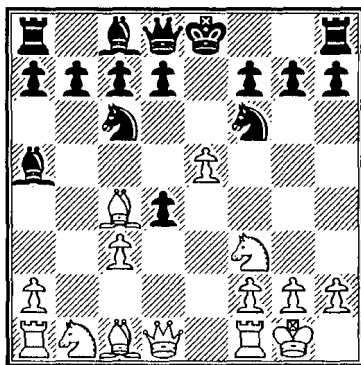
Anderssen's play was distinguished by brilliant fantasy, a notable combinative talent, a phenomenal mastery of attack, and enormous courage. This was the sort of opponent with whom our hero was to cross swords. This match cannot even be compared with Morphy's matches versus Löwenthal and Harrwitz. The difference lies in the essence of his new opponent, whose real importance was not yet fully appreciated; after all "great matters can only be seen at a distance."

Prior to the start of the match Morphy was suffering a severe case of influenza and was confined to bed as a result. Anderssen offered to cancel the match, but Morphy refused and the first game began on schedule. Morphy was still so weak that he required assistance to reach the playing hall, which was in the hotel where he was living.

Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (1) December 20, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5
4.b4 ♙×b4 5.c3 ♙a5 6.d4 exd4
7.0-0 ♘f6 8.e5?



Astonishingly, Morphy commits a well-known, serious error. 8.♙a3! d6 9.e5! as played by Morphy himself, and later Steinitz, was much stronger.

8...d5 9.♙b5 ♘e4 10.c×d4?!

This move is also most unfortunate. Soon, almost by force, White lands in a passive position, riddled with weaknesses – that is to say, lost. Therefore, it was necessary to alter the course of this unfavorably unfolding struggle at once, without losing a single move. Such a course might have been 10.♙a4!? ♙×c3!? 11.♙×c6+ b×c6 12.♘×c3 ♘×c3 13.♙×c6+ ♙d7 14.♙c5 ♙e7 15.♙×e7+ (far superior to 15.♙×c7? ♙b5 when White's in a bad way) 15...♙×e7 16.♙a3+ ♙e6 17.♙fe1 ♘e4 18.♘×d4+ ♙×e5 19.f3 ♙×d4 20.f×e4 when White would have hopes of saving the game.

10...0-0!

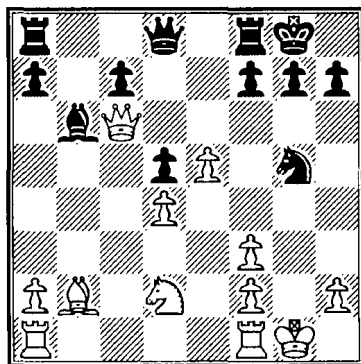
Anderssen correctly selects the most

active approach. The more “solid” 10...♙d7 11.♙a3 a6 12.♙a4 would leave White with fighting chances.

11.♙xc6 bxc6 12.♙a4 ♙b6 13.♙xc6 ♙g4 14.♙b2

It would appear that 14.♙e3!? was better; but then too, after 14...f6 15.♙e1 ♙e8 Black has a significant advantage.

14...♙xf3 15.gxf3 ♘g5 16.♙d2



16...♙e8?!

Anderssen misses his chance to obtain a winning position with 16...♙h3+! 17.♙g2 ♙h4 18.♙c2 ♙ae8 19.♙f5 ♙f4+ 20.♙h1 f6.

17.♙h1 ♙h3 18.f4!

Wonderful! By opening the third rank for his pieces and capitalizing on the chance to coordinate his forces, Morphy finds the only way to avoid an inglorious and unresisting end as would have happened after 18.♙b3 ♙e6 19.♙c2 ♙h4 20.♙c1 ♙xd4 21.♙xd4 ♙xd4 22.♙b2 ♙f4.

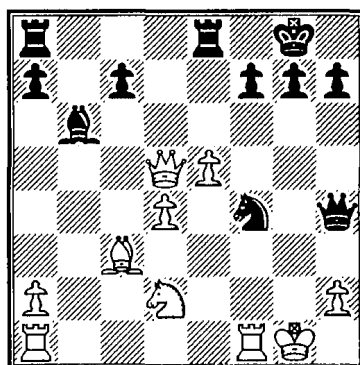
18...♙h4?!

Anderssen again selects the most ener-

getic continuation. Also worthy of consideration was 18...♙xf4 19.a4 ♙b8 (this is much better than 19...a5?! 20.♙a3) 20.♙c2 although Black holds a great advantage.

Both players have made miscalculations in this game and we will see more of them. But what stays with a player forever, even during moments of poor form, is his understanding of, and feeling for, the principles of play. It is here that both Morphy and Anderssen show their greatness, for neither had ever before faced such an opponent!

19.♙xd5 ♙xf2+ 20.♙g1 ♙d3 21.♙c3 ♙xf4?!



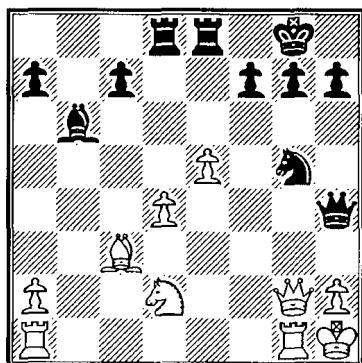
Amazingly, this obvious reply is an inaccuracy. 21...c5! was a powerful blow: 22.♙c4 (after 22.♙e4 cxd4 23.♙xd4 ♙xe5! 24.♙xb6 ♙g4 25.♙g2 axb6 Black obtains a decisive advantage) 22...♙xf4 23.♙f3 cxd4 24.♙d2 ♙g6 25.♙xf7+ ♙h8 26.♙b7 d3+! 27.♙xb6 axb6 28.♙xb6 ♙g4+ 29.♙h1 ♙e4+ 30.♙g1 ♙xe5 with a very great advantage.

22.♙f3

This is acceptable, but 22.♙e4!? ♙g6 23.♙xh4 ♙xh4 24.♙c4 looks even

stronger when Black would not have a great advantage.

22...♖h3+ 23.♔h1 ♕g5 24.♖g2 ♜ad8 25.♞g1

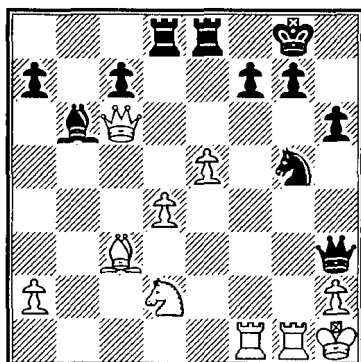


A difficult and important moment; it's not easy to fathom this position even with home analysis. How much harder must it have been to do so during the game, especially given Morphy's poor physical shape? His decision must have been based on his principled understanding of the essence of chess and on his intuition, which allows one to come to a decision without deep calculations. Morphy's choice is most characteristic; he concentrates the maximum possible force at the center of the battle. Unfortunately, this leaves the center hopelessly weakened, which Morphy hoped to maintain with the aid of tactics.

Maróczy's proposed variation: 25.♕f3 ♕xf3 26.♖xf3 ♜xd4 27.♖xf7+ ♔h8 28.♞f4 ♖xf4 29.♖xf4 ♜xc3 30.♞b1 ♜xe5 31.♖c4 leads to a position where White must defend very accurately. Another tempting variation is 25.♞ad1! ♖h3! (25...♜xd4 26.♜xd4 ♞xd4 27.♞g1 h6? (27...♞xd2! 28.♞xd2 h6 29.♞c2 ♞e7 30.♖g4! is correct, with equality) 28.♕f3 and White wins) 26.♖xh3 ♕xh3 27.♕c4 ♞d5 and Black

has only a small edge.

25...h6 26.♞af1 ♖h3 27.♖c6?



This move loses the game, which could have been saved with 27.♖xh3 ♕xh3 28.♞g4! (much better than 28.♞g3 ♕g5 29.h4 ♜xd4! 30.hxg5 ♜xc3 31.♞xc3 ♞xd2 32.♞xc7 ♞xe5 33.gxh6 ♞ee2 when Black wins), and now:

a) 28...♕g5 29.h4 ♕e6 30.♕e4 ♖h8 31.♕f6! (This is the whole point! The possibility of this move supports the principal correctness of the plan ♞g1 and ♞f1!) 31...♞e7 32.d5 gxh6 (after 32...♕f8 33.e6! fxe6 34.♕h5 it is Black who has problems!) 33.♞xf6! ♕g7 34.d6! ♞e6 35.♞xf7 ♕h5 36.♞f5 ♕g7 37.♞f7 with a draw;

b) 28...♞d5 29.♕e4 ♕g5 30.♕xg5 hxg5 31.♞xg5 ♜xd4 32.e6! f5 33.♜xd4 ♞xd4 34.♞c1 and White's chances of a draw are quite real.

27...♖d7 28.♖g2 ♜xd4 29.♜xd4 ♖xd4 30.♕f3 ♖d5 31.h4 ♕e6 32.♖g4 ♖c6

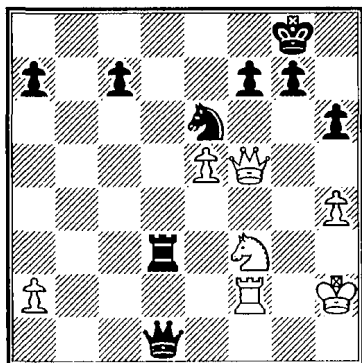
Obviously, there's no sense in going into variations such as 32...♖xa2 33.♞a1.

33.♞g2 ♞d3 34.♖f5 ♞ed8 35.♖f6

Anderssen was probably hoping that his

opponent would play 35.♖xf7+ ♕xf7 36.♘d4+ ♖f3 37.♗xf3+ ♖xf3 38.♘xf3 ♖d3 when Black has an easily won endgame. Morphy attempts to continue the struggle.

35...♖d5 36.♖f5 ♖d1 37.♗xd1 ♖xd1+ 38.♕h2 ♖d3 39.♖f2



39...♖e3!?

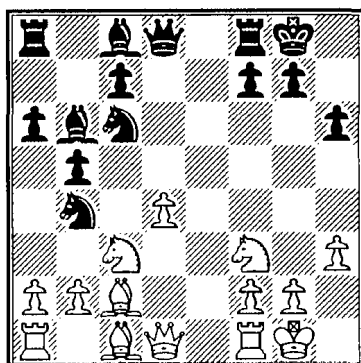
True to his principles, Anderssen is prepared to part with some of his material advantage to increase the positional. Despite White's desperate resistance, he unhurriedly brings his advantage home.

40.♘d2 ♖e2 41.♖xf7+ ♕h8 42.♘e4 ♖xf2+ 43.♘xf2 ♖d5 44.♘g4 ♖xa2+ 45.♕g3 ♖b3+ 46.♕h2 ♖c2+ 47.♕g3 ♖c3+ 48.♕h2 ♖c6 49.h5 a5 50.♘f6 gxf6 51.♖xf6+ ♕g8 52.♖g6+ ♕f8 53.♖xh6+ ♕e8 54.♖g6+ ♕d7 55.h6 ♖d5 56.h7 ♖xe5+ 57.♕g1 ♘g5 58.h8♖ ♖xh8 59.♖xg5 ♖d4+ 60.♕f1 a4 61.♖f5+ ♖c6 62.♖c8 ♖b5 63.♕e1 c5 64.♖b7+ ♖c4 65.♖f7+ ♖c3 66.♖f3+ ♖d3 67.♖f6+ ♖b3 68.♖b6+ ♖c2 69.♖a7 ♖c3+ 70.♕e2 a3 71.♖a4+ ♖b2 72.♖b5+ ♖b3 0-1

Anderssen, A. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (2) December 21, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♖b5 a6 4.♖a4 ♘f6 5.d3 ♖c5 6.c3 b5 7.♖c2 d5 8.exd5 ♘xd5 9.h3 0-0 10.0-0 h6 11.d4 exd4 12.cxd4 ♖b6 13.♘c3 ♘db4



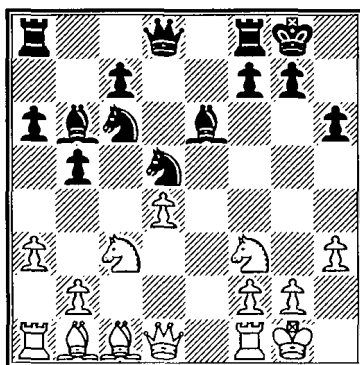
Morphy's experiences playing against the isolated pawn had been rather negative -- recall his match against Löwenthal. Yet, it helped him absorb the principles of such positions, and he played more assuredly against Anderssen. Objectively, the best continuation would have been 13...♘f6!? 14.♖e3 ♖e6 with an excellent game for Black because of his control of the key d5-square. Morphy attempts to achieve the same end, but with "an extra tempo;" he knew nothing about the usefulness of the move a2-a3 – or, correspondingly, a7-a6 – for the side having the isolated pawn. Meanwhile, he also overlooked a very simple tactic.

14.♖b1 ♖e6?

This move is a terrible oversight. He should have taken the pawn: 14...♘xd4 although after 15.♘xd4 ♖xd4 (15...♖xd4 16.♖f3 ♖b8 17.♖d1 c5 18.♖f4 results in approximate equality)

16. ♖f3 ♜b8 17. ♖g3 White has full compensation for the pawn.

15.a3 ♘d5



16. ♘e2?

Unbelievable! The two best players of the era failed to find 16. ♖c2! and now: 16... ♘f6 17. ♘e4 when White wins; or 16... f5 17. ♜e1 ♖f6 18. ♜xe6 ♖xe6 19. ♘xd5 winning; or 16... g6 17. ♘xh6 ♜e8 18. ♜d1 when White has an extra pawn and the better position.

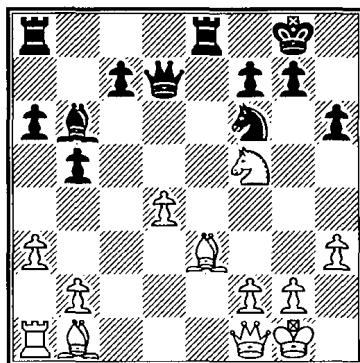
But wait – it gets better! The same opening was repeated in the 4th game, and there White played 16. ♘e3?! R. Knaak was the first commentator to mention 16. ♖c2!, followed by the one-word annotation: “Fritz.” This whole episode might well be classified as the most amazing oversight in chess history!

16... ♘f6 17. ♘e3 ♜e8 18. ♘g3 ♘c4 19. ♘f5?!

This position is strategically very pleasant for Black. White would be ill-advised to play 19. ♜e1 ♘xd4! here; while after 19. ♘d3 ♘xd3 20. ♖xd3 ♖d5 White still has his isolated pawn, but in a passive position. Anderssen, true to his usual active style, gives up the

exchange to retain some counter-chances. He also intended further sacrifices.

19... ♘xh6 20. ♖xh6 ♘e7 21. ♘h4 ♘xf5 22. ♘xf5 ♖d7



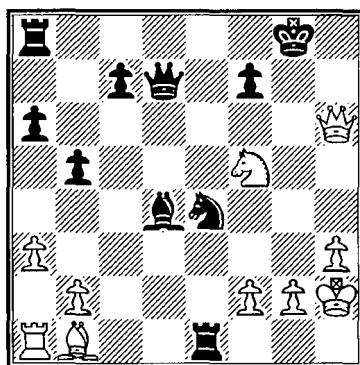
23. ♘xh6!

Of course, this was what Anderssen had in mind when making his 19th move.

23... g×h6

It's hard to give this move a dubious mark; but 23... g6!? 24. ♖c1 ♘e4 gave Black a much simpler win.

24. ♖c1 ♘xd4 25. ♖xh6 ♜e1+ 26. ♖h2 ♘e4?



This move involves either a miscalculation or an improper assessment of the

coming endgame. Black's only real chance to fight for the win, as Knaak indicated, was 26...♙xf5! with the likely continuation 27.♙xf5 ♖xa1 28.♙g5+ (28.♙f4 ♖d8 29.♙xc7 ♖d5-+) 28...♙f8 29.♙h6+ ♙e7 30.♙f4 ♖d8 31.♙xc7+ ♙e8 32.♙c8 ♖d5 33.♙c6+ ♙e7 34.♙a6 ♙xb2 35.♙xb5 ♖xa3 with advantage to Black.

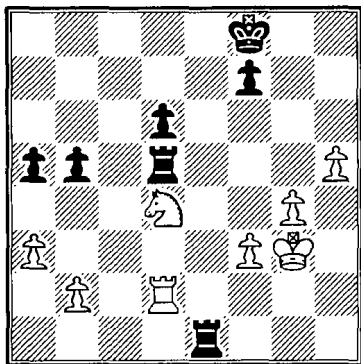
27.♙xe4 ♖xe4

27...♙e5+ 28.f4 ♖xe4 29.♙g5+! ♙f8 30.fxe5 could not have been attractive to Black.

28.♙g5+ ♙f8 29.♙h6+ ♙e8 30.♙xd4

Perhaps it was this simple move, or its consequences, which Morphy either overlooked or underestimated.

30...♙d6+ 31.♙xd6 cxd6 32.♖d1 ♙f8 33.♖d2 ♖ae8 34.g4 ♖8e5 35.f3 ♖e1 36.h4 ♖d5 37.♙g3 a5 38.h5



White has put together something resembling a fortress; at least, it is not clear how Black could storm it.

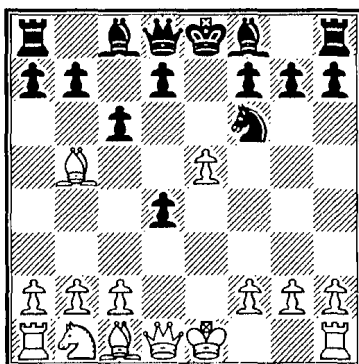
38...♙g8 39.♙f2 ♖e8 40.♙g3 ♖e7 41.♙f4 ♙h7 42.♙g3 ♖e3 43.♙f4 ♖e8 44.♙g3 ♖e3 ½-½

After the opportunities he had missed in the first two games, we must suppose that Morphy's disposition would have been cheerless. And we have seen how dangerous he could be at such a time – especially when an opponent such as Anderssen would not shrink from open warfare!

Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (3) December 22, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♙f3 ♙c6 3.♙b5 ♙f6 4.d4 ♙xd4 5.♙xd4 exd4 6.e5 c6



7.0-0!

Morphy plays energetically and accurately. Having wrested the initiative, he refuses to relinquish it, as could have happened after 7.♙xd4 ♙d5 8.0-0 (Black has equal chances after 8.♙c4 ♙b4 9.♙b3 d5 10.0-0 ♙f5) 8...♙b6 with equality. Black's affairs are also in order after 7.exf6 ♙a5+ 8.♙d2 ♙xb5 9.♙xd4 gxf6.

7...cxb5 8.♙g5! ♙e7

Not 8...h6? 9.exf6 hxg5 10.♖e1+.

9.exf6 ♙xf6 10.♖e1+ ♙f8 11.♙xf6 ♙xf6 12.c3!?

A typical decision for Morphy, he of-

fers another pawn sacrifice and when Black declines it, White obtains a long-lasting initiative. Another decent line was 12.♘d2!?, but the game continuation was more congruent with Morphy's style.

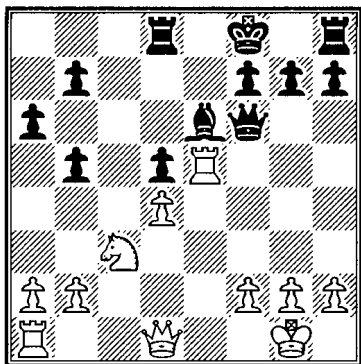
12...d5

Capturing the pawn would be too dangerous: 12...dxc3 13.♘xc3 d6 (13...a6? 14.♘e4 is hopeless for Black) 14.♘d5 ♖d8 15.♖c1 ♙f5 (15...♙e6 16.♖xe6 fxe6 17.♖f3+ ♜g8 18.♖c7 is also bad) 16.♘c7 ♖c8 17.♖e8+ ♜xe8 18.♘xe8 and wins.

13.cxd4 ♙e6

Black can't restrain White's development with 13...b4? because of 14.♖a4!

14.♘c3 a6 15.♖e5 ♖d8



Perhaps he should have played 15...g6 instead, but even after 16.♘xd5 ♙xd5 17.♖xd5 ♜g7 18.♖d2 ♖ad8 19.♖xd8 ♖xd8 20.d5 White obtains a small long-lasting advantage.

16.♖b3!

Morphy unsettles his opponent with positional threats, making his development more difficult.

16...♖e7

Black still should have considered 16...g6; after 17.a4 bxa4 18.♖xb7 ♜g7 19.♖xa6 ♖b8 20.♖e2 White's advantage is not very big.

17.♖ae1

Morphy has finished his development and, as usual, he has managed to outstrip his opponent – even one such as Anderssen!

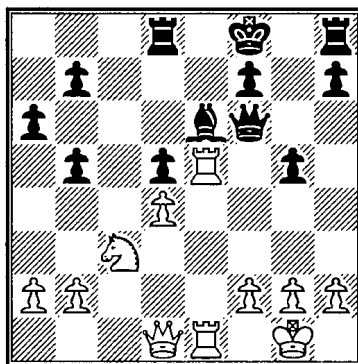
17...g5

Now after 17...g6 18.♘e2 ♜g7 19.♘f4 ♖he8 20.♖g3 ♖d6 21.h4 White creates long-lasting pressure, and Black finds it very hard to free himself. So Anderssen decides on this sharp, weakening thrust; other choices lose meekly.

18.♖d1

18.♘e2!? looked good.

18...♖f6



19.♖1e3?

Morphy's unfortunate habit resurfaces; upon achieving a most favorable position he loses focus. Positions don't win themselves! Much stronger was

19.♖e2! ♜c8 20.♗d2 h6 21.f4 ♕g4
22.fxg5 hxg5 23.♞xg5 ♕xe2 24.♞xe2
with a great advantage.

19...♞g8??

As we have seen many times before, Black answers his opponent's error with one of his own – and this one still more serious. After the obvious 19...♞g7 White would have only a small advantage.

20.♞xe6 1-0

The play in this game, to a great extent, resembles that of the final game in the match with Löwenthal.

Next came the 4th match game and, of course, there's no need to reexamine its opening stage!

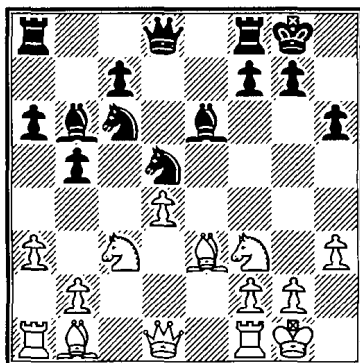
Anderssen, A. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (4) December 22, 1858

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♕b5 a6
4.♕a4 ♖f6 5.d3 ♕c5 6.c3 b5
7.♕c2 d5 8.exd5 ♖xd5 9.h3 0-0
10.0-0 h6 11.d4 exd4 12.cxd4
♕b6 13.♖c3 ♖db4 14.♕b1 ♕e6?

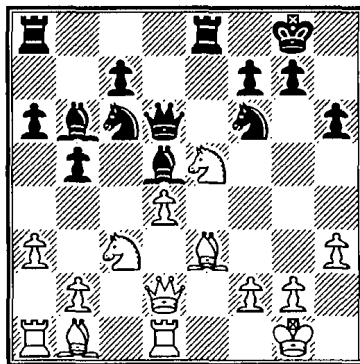
Again!

15.a3 ♖d5 16.♕e3?!



Anderssen discovers a new and quite logical plan which would have been fine, except that he *still* didn't find the elementary 16.♞c2! – not even at home!

16...♖f6! 17.♗d2 ♜e8 18.♞d1
♕d5 19.♖e5 ♗d6



According to Neishtadt, Morphy avers that 19...♖xe5? would have been good for Black and “demonstrates” this with 20.dxe5 ♜xe5 21.♕xb6 (21.♕f4 ♜h5 22.g4 ♖xg4 23.♖xd5 ♗h4 with the attack – Morphy. But as Max Lange indicated after 24.♖xb6 cxb6 25.♕g3 Black has no attack and White wins easily. Earlier still Maróczy suggests 21...♜e8 which is much stronger.) 21...cxb6 22.♕a2 ♗e8 23.♖xd5 ♖xd5 24.♕xd5 ♜d8 25.♕xf7+ ♗xf7 26.♗xd8 ♜e1+ 27.♗h2 ♗xd8 28.♜xd8 ♜xa1 29.♜d6 ♜b1 30.♜xb6 ♜xb2 31.♜xa6 ♜xf2 and Morphy assesses the chances as roughly equal. Yet, Maróczy again indicates that after 24.f4 White wins straight away.

This gives rise to another parallel between Morphy and Capablanca, who sometimes erred in home analysis even in his best years – but never in a game! This similarity supports the theory that the nature of both players' genius was largely intuitive!

20. ♖c2?

Anderssen blunders! More in keeping with his style is Knaak's suggestion of 20. ♖xd5 ♖xd5 21. ♖c2 ♖xe3 22. ♖h7+ ♖f8 23. ♖xf7! ♖xf7 24. fxe3 leading to a complex position that is perhaps a little more promising for Black.

20... ♖xd4! 21. ♖xd4

21. ♖xd4 ♖xd4 22. ♖xd4 ♖b7 23. ♖a2 ♖xe5 24. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 would have given Black a significant advantage.

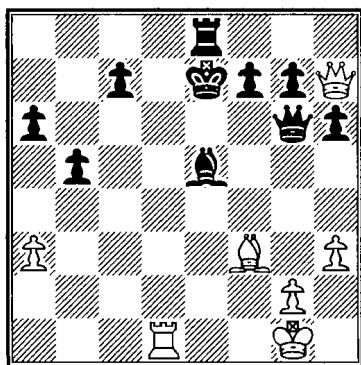
21... ♖xd4 22. ♖xd5 ♖xe5 23. ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 24. ♖h7+ ♖f8

Now it's clear that White has no compensation for his lost material. Moreover, Black controls the center, which gives him a positional advantage.

25. ♖e4 ♖ad8 26. ♖h1 ♖xb2 27. ♖ab1 ♖xd1+ 28. ♖xd1 ♖xf2 29. ♖h8+

Not 29. ♖d7? ♖e1+ 30. ♖h2 ♖e5+.

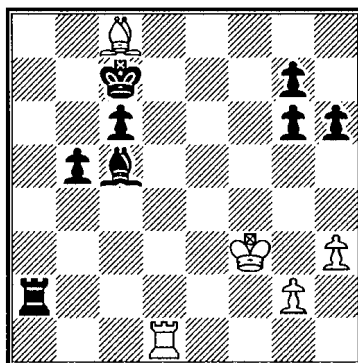
29... ♖e7 30. ♖h7 ♖e5 31. ♖f3 ♖g3 32. ♖g1 ♖g6



The endgame is an elementary win. There were other possibilities, but

Morphy was not interested in them. I'm sure Capablanca would have done likewise!

33. ♖xg6 f×g6 34. ♖b7 ♖b8 35. ♖xa6 c6 36. ♖f2 ♖d6 37. ♖d3 ♖d7 38. ♖e2 ♖a8 39. ♖b7 ♖xa3 40. ♖d1 ♖c7 41. ♖c8 ♖a2+ 42. ♖f3 ♖c5?!



Once again, with a winning position comes a misstep! A simpler way to win was 42... ♖a8 43. ♖b7 (43. ♖e6 ♖f8+ 44. ♖e4 ♖e8) 43... ♖a3+ 44. ♖e4 ♖a4+ 45. ♖f3 ♖e5.

43. ♖e6 ♖f2+ 44. ♖g3 ♖f6 45. ♖d7+ ♖b6 46. ♖g4 ♖d6+ 47. ♖h4 c5 48. ♖f3 c4 49. ♖xg7 ♖f4+ 50. ♖g4 c3 51. g3

Or 51. ♖xg6 ♖d4 52. ♖f6 c2.

51... ♖xg4+ 0-1

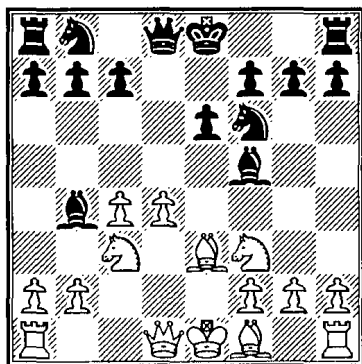
In the next game, Anderssen varied from 1...e5 for the first time in the match.

Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (5) December 12, 1858

1. e4 d5 2. e×d5 ♖f6 3. d4 ♖xd5 4. c4 ♖f6 5. ♖c3 ♖f5 6. ♖f3 e6

7.♙e3 ♜b4?



An active move, but a poor one in this position; developing the bishop to the e7-square would have been perfectly acceptable.

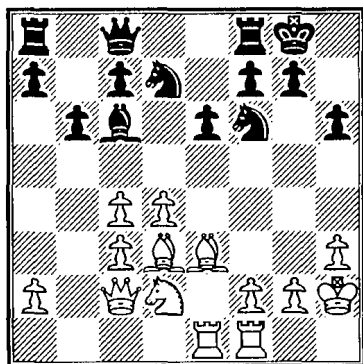
8.♜b3 ♜xc3+ 9.bxc3!?

This recapture makes excellent sense because it reduces Black's chances for counterplay and opens the b-file which could be useful later on.

9...♙e4 10.♞d2 ♜c6 11.♙d3 ♞bd7 12.♜c2

Forestalling 12...♞c5.

12...h6 13.0-0 0-0 14.♞ae1 b6 15.h3 ♜c8 16.♞h2



We are already familiar with Morphy's "patented" plan, but it looks very

double-edged with the center still in flux and insufficiently controlled by White. I prefer seizing the center with 16.f4!? ♜b7 17.♞f3 c5 18.f5 (or 18.♞e5).

16...♞h8?!

Morphy was trying to provoke Black into 16...e5? to which he would have reacted 17.f4 exf4 18.♞xf4 with a great advantage. However, correct was 16...♜b7!? 17.♞g1 c5 with counterplay.

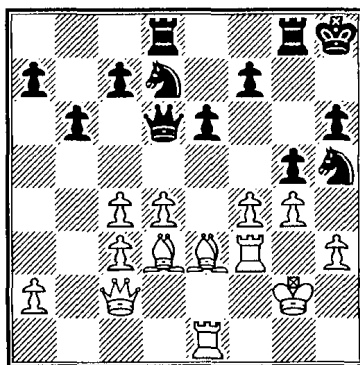
17.♞g1 ♞g8?!

Anderssen implements a misguided plan. Here either 17...e5!? 18.f4 exf4 19.♜xf4 ♞e8 or 17...♜b7!? 18.g4 c5 would have been quite good.

18.g4 g5?

This move puts the final "splat" on Black's position. It was better to play 18...♜b7!? and after 19.h4 h5 20.f3 White would have been better, but with a whole game yet to be played. Now it ends quickly.

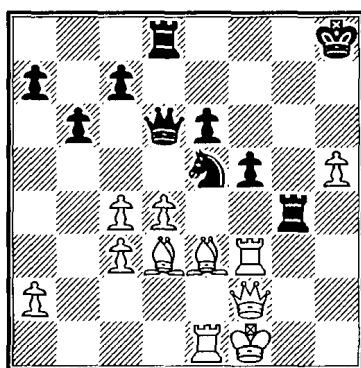
19.f4 ♜f8 20.♞g3! ♞d8 21.♞f3! ♜xf3 22.♞xf3 ♜d6 23.♞g2 ♞h5



This move doesn't even deserve a ques-

tion mark! The point being that Black made it fully realizing the hopelessness of his position as the following variations demonstrate: 23...c5 24.f×g5 h×g5 25.♖f2 ♜e7 26.♞f1 and White wins; or 23...g×f4 24.♙f4 ♜f8 25.♙d2 h5 26.♙g5 which is, of course, hopeless. It's strange that a player of Anderssen's class should have been unable to foresee this turn of events.

24.f×g5 h×g5 25.g×h5 g4 26.h×g4
♞×g4+ 27.♜f1 f5 28.♖f2 ♘e5



29.d×e5?!

This allows absolutely unnecessary complications. White's task would have been made far simpler by the elementary 29.♙f4 ♘d3 (29...♞×f4 30.♞×e5) 30.♙d6 ♘f2 31.♙e5+.

29...♖×d3+ 30.♖e2 ♜e4 31.♙f2
♖c6 32.♞d1 ♞×d1+ 33.♖×d1
♖×c4+ 34.♖d3 ♖×a2 35.♞g3
♖c4 36.♖×c4 ♞×c4 37.♞g6 ♞c6
38.c4 a5 39.♜e2 ♞×c4 40.♞×e6
♞c2+ 41.♜f3 a4 42.♞g6 ♞c4
43.♞g1 a3 44.e6 a2 45.♞a1?!

And this isn't even funny! Again, Morphy relaxes in a totally winning position. A quicker, simpler win was 45.♞e1 ♞e4 46.♞e4 f×e4+ 47.♜×e4.

45...♞e4 46.♞×a2 ♞×e6 47.♜f4
♞d6 48.♜×f5 ♞d5+ 49.♜g4 b5
50.♞a8+ ♜h7 51.♞a7 ♞d7
52.♙g3 ♞g7+ 53.♜h3 1-0

The next game evolved into a most interesting strategic opening duel between the two great masters of open positions.

Anderssen, A. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (6) December 12, 1858

1.a3

There is a simple explanation for this amazing first move. After the match, Anderssen said that playing open games against Morphy was suicidal. So he thought of a sensible and, as would soon become clear, effective method of making the game semi-open.

Anderssen, judging only from the games of this match, played a more varied style than Morphy, as did almost all the other leading players of the day, and had a wider variety of opening and strategic schemes, techniques, and variations. Nevertheless, Morphy was much stronger than all of them, including Anderssen.

Why was this? How did someone so young have such a deep understanding and inherent intuition about the secrets of the game? We have already formulated some answers throughout this book, but at the end we will compile them and draw our final conclusions!

1...e5

Morphy, of course, replies just so. This straightforward stubbornness is another parallel between Morphy and Fischer.

2.c4 ♟f6 3.♟c3 d5 4.c×d5 ♟×d5

We now have a Sicilian with colors reversed. In our day, such transpositions are well known and occur frequently.

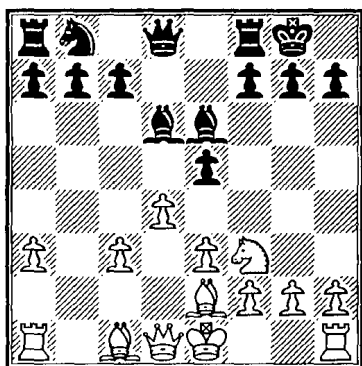
5.e3 ♟e6 6.♟f3 ♟d6 7.♟e2 0-0

Morphy had less experience against the Sicilian than Anderssen and he plays inaccurately. Current trends suggest the immediate 7...♟c6 was better.

8.d4 ♟×c3

Now after 8...♟c6 9.e4 ♟×c3 10.b×c3 the knight stands poorly at c6.

9.b×c3



9...e4

Morphy played this pawn thrust in all three games that featured this opening. He could also have maintained the central tension with 9...♟d7.

10.♟d2 f5 11.f4 g5?

Contrary to his style, Morphy plays “actively” before developing his pieces. A decent-looking line was 11...e×f3 12.♟×f3 c6 13.0-0 ♟c7 14.g3 ♟d7 15.♟e2 ♟ae8. In the 8th game Morphy would play 11...♟h4+.

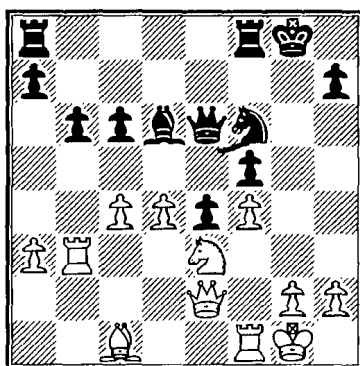
12.♟c4

An interesting decision, but perhaps White should have kept his bishops by playing 12.♟c4.

12...♟×c4 13.♟×c4 g×f4 14.e×f4 ♟e8!

With his position seriously compromised, Morphy “comes to his senses” and finds a good way of consolidating his forces, bringing the light squares under control.

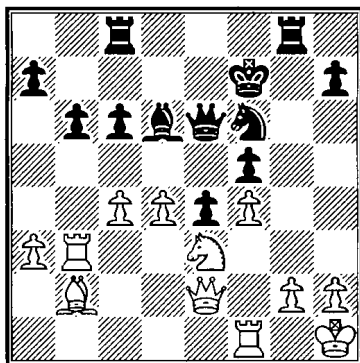
15.0-0 ♟c6 16.♟b3 ♟d5 17.♟b1 b6 18.♟a2 c6 19.♟e2 ♟d7 20.♟e3 ♟e6 21.c4 ♟f6 22.♟b3



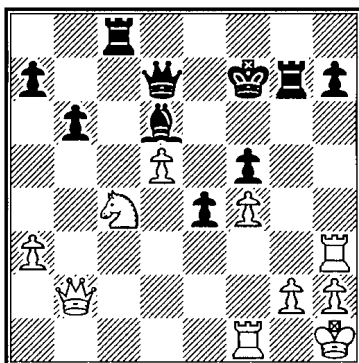
22...♟f7?

How painfully familiar! Having incrementally resolved the problems created by his poor opening play, Morphy “plays for the win” and almost fatally spoils his position. The attempt to secure the light squares by 22...b5? 23.d5 c×d5 24.c×d5 ♟×d5 25.♟×d5 ♟×d5 26.♟g3+ would win for White, but after 22...♟f7? 23.♟b2 ♟f8 (once again, 23...b5? 24.d5 c×d5 25.♟×b5 is bad – there’s that “eternal weakness” on f5!) 24.♟d1 ♟d8 Black would have a wholly acceptable position.

23.♙b2 ♖ac8 24.♜h1 ♜g8



29...♜f7 30.♜h3 ♜g7



Now, White breaks through with decisive effect.

25.d5! cxd5 26.cxd5 ♜d7

After 26...♜xd5?! 27.♜h5+ ♜f8 28.♜xf5 ♜e7 29.♜d4 White would have a great advantage.

27.♜c4 ♜e7

In reply to 27...♜xd5 Knaak demonstrates the pretty blow 28.♜b5! and after 28...♜c5 29.♜xc5 bxc5 30.♜e5! ♜e7 31.♜h5+ White has a winning attack.

28.♜xf6+

This is quite enough to win, but 28.♜h3! ♜b5 (28...♜g6 29.♜xf6+ ♜xf6 30.♜b2+-) 29.♜xf6+ ♜xf6 30.♜h5! ♜xc4 31.♜h4+ ♜f7 32.♜xh7+ was quicker and simpler.

28...♜xf6 29.♜b2+?!

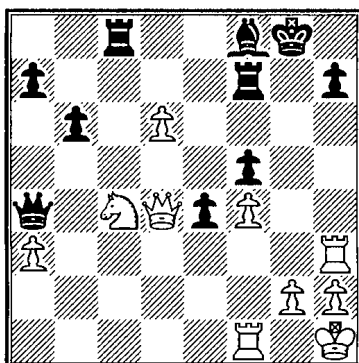
This move costs White a portion of his advantage and terribly prolongs the game. Here, too, 29.♜h3! ♜b8 (29...♜b5 30.♜h5! is familiar) 30.♜e3 was very strong, giving White an overwhelming position.

31.♜d4?

It unexpectedly transpires that this natural centralizing move is a crucial error. Anderssen did not sense the importance of maintaining control of the light squares. In such situations, Morphy's intuition nearly always guided him correctly.

White would have kept a very modest advantage after 31.♜e5+ ♜xe5 32.fxe5 ♜xd5 33.♜h5 ♜g8 34.♜hx5 h6; but 31.♜b3! was very strong, giving White a dangerous initiative after 31...♜g8 32.♜h5! ♜f8 33.♜h6 ♜c5 (33...♜g6 34.♜e5 ♜xe5 35.♜xg6+ hxg6 36.fxe5+) 34.♜e5.

31...♜g8 32.♜h6 ♜f8 33.d6 ♜f7 34.♜h3 ♜a4!



The text is much stronger than 34...♖e6.

35.♞c1?

Too optimistic; White's best chance was 35.♞g3+! ♔g7 36.♞xg7+ ♞xg7 37.♖d5+ ♖h8 38.♙e5 ♞f8 39.d7 ♞d8 40.♙f7+ (40.♞d1 e3 is good for Black) 40...♞xf7 41.♖xf7 ♖xd7 42.♖f6+ ♖g8 43.♖g5+ ♖f7 44.♖h6 ♖e8 45.♖f6 ♖d5 46.♖h8+ with equality.

35...♞c5?

Black loses an exceptionally vital tempo. On the immediate 35...♔g7 White should not continue 35.♖d5? ♞c5 37.♖a8+ (37.♖e6 ♖d7+) 37...♞f8 38.♖b7 h6! 39.♖e7 (39.♞g3 ♞f7+) 39...♞f7 40.♖e6 ♖d7 when Black has a great advantage. Even after the superior 36.♞g3 h6! White must play very accurately to avoid losing right away: 37.h3! ♖h7! 38.♖d5 ♖d7 39.♖d2 ♖e6. But then Black still has an indisputable advantage.

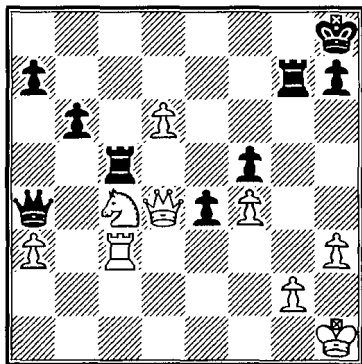
But now, everything changes. Such is the price of one tempo in sharp positions!

36.♞g3+ ♔g7 37.h3 ♖h8 38.♞xg7?!

Evidently, Anderssen was growing tired from the tense struggle. Had he found 38.♖d2! ♖c6 39.♞cc3!? with the unstoppable 40.♙e5! to follow, he would have had every chance of winning the game.

38...♞g7 39.♞c3 (see next diagram) 39...e3!

Morphy finds the only saving move. The dangers awaiting Black are evident



from the following variations: 39...♔g8 40.♞g3! ♖d7 41.♙e5 and wins; or 39...♞c8 40.♖f6! ♖e8 41.♙e5 ♞xc3 42.d7 ♞c1+ 43.♖h2 ♖xd7 44.♙xd7 ♞c2 45.♔g1 ♞cxg2+ 46.♖f1 when the white king escapes the checks.

40.♞xe3?

Anderssen commits the decisive error. After 40.♖f6 ♞xc4 (40...♖d1+ 41.♖h2 ♖d5? is bad because of 42.♙xe3 ♖f7 43.♖d4 ♞xc3 44.♖xc3 h6 45.♖e5 when White must win) 41.♖f8+ ♞g8 42.♖f6+ it's a draw.

40...♞xc4 41.♖f6 ♞c1+ 42.♖h2 ♖xf4+ 0-1

This was an exceptionally difficult game, full of complex calculation. Despite the great confusion and unpredictability of events, Morphy's victory was well-deserved because he was able to stay in control during the critical moments, especially between moves 38 and 40.

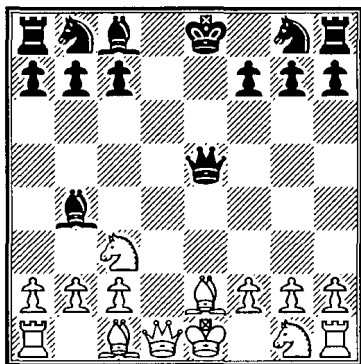
Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (7) December 25, 1858

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♖xd5 3.♙c3 ♖a5 4.d4 e5? 5.dxe5 ♖xe5+ 6.♙e2

It's possible that White's best reply is actually 6.♖e2, which Tarrasch later played in a simultaneous game against Nilsson that continued 6...♗×e2+ 7.♙×e2 ♘b4 8.♙f4 giving White a long-term advantage in the endgame, although Tarrasch won quickly in only 15 moves.

6...♙b4



7.♙f3!?

After the natural 7.♙d2 I don't see how White gains an advantage after 7...♙g4!?. Not surprisingly, Morphy's solution is to sacrifice a pawn for the initiative!

7...♙×c3+ 8.♖×c3 ♗×c3+ 9.♙d2 ♗c5 10.♖b1 ♙c6 11.0-0

11.♖b5 ♗d6 12.♖g5! was yet another unusual and entertaining way of fighting for the initiative.

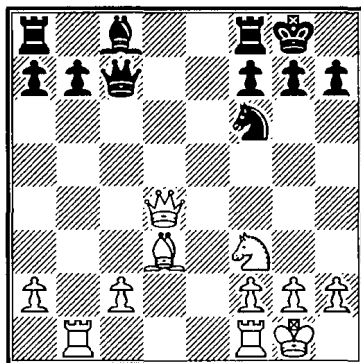
11...♙f6 12.♙f4

12.♙g5! was worth considering, as after 12...♗d6 13.♗×d6 c×d6 14.♖fe1! White has good compensation for the pawn.

12...0-0 13.♙×c7 ♙d4!?

This simple method completely equalizes for Black, but he soon commits a serious error.

14.♗×d4 ♗×c7 15.♙d3



15...♙g4?

After 15...b6 16.♖fe1 ♙b7 17.♗e5 ♖ac8 the game would have been completely even.

16.♙g5!

Anderssen evidently underestimated the force of this blow. Morphy's tactical eye was virtually irreproachable and he rarely missed such chances.

16...♖fd8

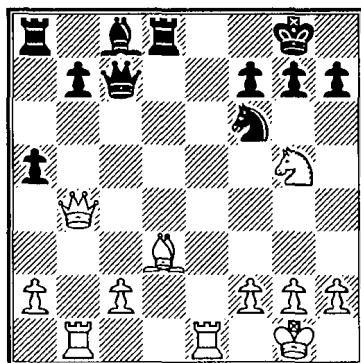
Black had better saving chances after 16...♙h5! 17.♙e4! ♙×e4 18.♗×e4 ♙g6 19.♗×b7 ♗×b7 20.♖b7 ♙×d3 21.c×d3 ♖fd8 22.♖d1 ♖ab8 because there are always chances in a rook endgame.

17.♗b4 ♙c8?!

This leaves Black too far behind in development. 17...♙d7 offered more hope, although after 18.♖fe1! ♙c6 (18...♖e8 19.♙c4!) 19.♖e7 ♖d7

20.♖b1 ♖xe7 (20...a5? 21.♖e8+! wins) 21.♖xe7 White keeps a large advantage.

18.♖fe1 a5



After 18...h6 19.♖e7 ♖d7? 20..♙h7+ ♜h8 21.♖e8+ mates.

19.♜e7!

The strongest move and characteristic of Morphy, who always tended toward clarity and never sought unnecessary complications – just as Capablanca described him.

19...♜xe7 20.♖xe7 ♘d5

20...♖d7 21.♖xd7 ♙xd7 22.♖xb7 h6 23.♘h7! also leaves White with a won position.

21.♙xh7+ ♜h8 22.♖xf7 ♘c3 23.♖e1 ♘xa2 24.♖f4 ♖a6 25.♙d3 1-0

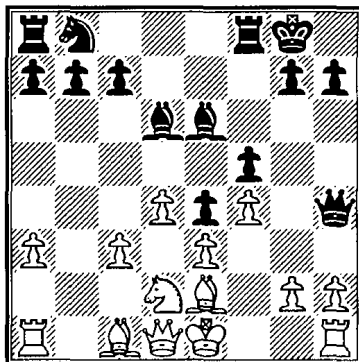
In the next game, the players pursued their duel of principle.

Anderssen, A. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (8) December 25, 1858

1.a3 e5 2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e3 ♙e6 6.♘f3 ♙d6

7.♙e2 0-0 8.d4 ♘xc3 9.bxc3 e4 10.♘d2 f5 11.f4 ♜h4+



Naturally, Morphy finds an improvement over his play in the 6th game.

12.g3 ♜h3 13.♙f1 ♜h6 14.c4

Anderssen embarks upon a plan to acquire space, which creates a number of weaknesses in his position. Before Steinitz's day, even the most talented masters weren't all that surefooted in the field of static chess! Anderssen should have played similarly to the 6th game: 14.♙c4 ♜h8 15.♜b3 ♙xc4 16.♘xc4 b6 17.0-0 ♘d7 18.a4 with somewhat better chances for White.

14...c6

I would prefer to continue 14...c5 15.♙b2 ♙f7.

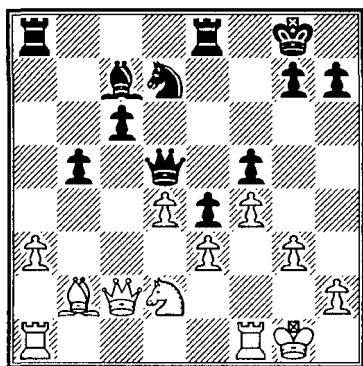
15.c5?!

While the pawn remained at c4, White's affairs were still in order. With the text, White concedes too much for the small amount of territory gained. A logical continuation is 15.♖b1 b6 16.♙g2 ♘d7 17.♜a4 with about even chances.

15...♙c7 16.♙c4?!

White's play is consistent – but bad. His light-squared bishop is an important piece with this pawn structure and shouldn't be exchanged. 16. ♖a4 ♕d7 17. ♖b1 looks better.

16... ♕d7 17. 0-0 b5 18. c×b6 a×b6 19. ♖b3 ♖fe8 20. ♖b2 b5 21. ♖×e6+ ♖×e6 22. ♖c2 ♖d5?!



Now Morphy commits a significant error, which is also based upon an insufficiently firm grasp of the principles of positional play where the static element predominates.

Black's main task is to prevent the white pieces from breaking out of the dark-square pawn chain. Instrumental in such a breakout would be a3-a4; Black would also find it useful to occupy the c4- and d5-squares with his pieces. This leads to the following plan: 22... ♖a5! 23. ♖c3 (after 23. ♕b3?! ♕b6 Black has a significant positional advantage) 23... ♕b6!? 24. ♖×a5 ♖×a5 25. ♕b3 ♖a7 26. ♕c5 ♖c4 and Black's chances must undoubtedly be rated higher.

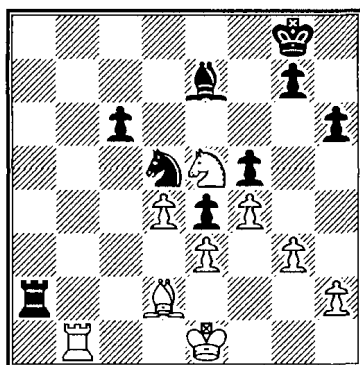
But now, White gets in a3-a4. Thus, one may conclude that Morphy wasted an important tempo and lost his initiative. But not a dynamic initiative that involves threatening to win material or

attacking the king, rather a static initiative based upon acquiring strategically important squares. I direct so much attention to this episode because it helps us make better sense of the makeup of Morphy's chess profile.

23. ♖fc1 ♖a6 24. a4 ♖ea8 25. a×b5 ♖×b5 26. ♖c4+ ♖×c4 27. ♕×c4 ♖×a1 28. ♖×a1 ♕f6 29. ♖c3 ♖a2 30. ♖d2 ♕d5 31. ♖f1 ♖d8?

Having lost his advantage earlier, Morphy strives to squeeze something out of nothing. After 31... ♖f7 the game would be even.

32. ♖e1 ♖e7 33. ♖b1 h6 34. ♕e5



34... c5?

After the elementary 34... ♖a6 35. ♖c1 ♖b4! Black holds the balance.

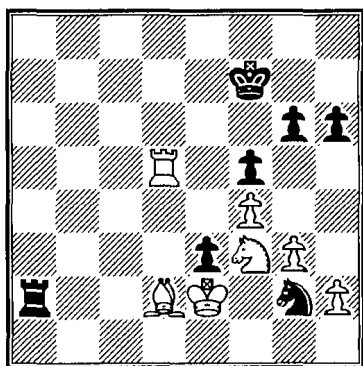
35. d×c5 ♖×c5 36. ♖b5

Perhaps Morphy missed that after 36... ♖×e3 37. ♖×d5 White's bishop is defended?

36... ♕×e3!

Black is very lucky to have this saving chance!

37. ♖xc5 ♕g2+ 38. ♖e2 e3 39. ♖f3
g6 40. ♖d5 ♖f7??



A gross blunder: 40... ♖g7 41. ♖a5 ♖b2 was correct. Obviously, Morphy was far from his best form.

41. ♖d6??

Amazingly, Anderssen fails to find 41. ♖a5! ♖b2 42. ♖e5+ ♖f6 43. ♖c4 and wins, although this was the second game played that day.

41... ♖g7! 42. h4

A very important factor in this position is that the exchange of rooks is insufficient to win: 42. ♖e5 ♖xd2+ 43. ♖xd2 exd2 44. ♖xd2 g5 45. f×g5 h×g5 46. ♖e2 f4 47. ♖f2 f×g3+ 48. h×g3 ♖f4. Now Black no longer has this variation. But there is another:

42... exd2 43. ♖xd2 ♖a4 44. ♖f2
♖xf4 45. g×f4 ♖xf4 46. ♖d4

Keeping the rooks doesn't win for White either: 46. ♖d7+ ♖g8 47. ♖g3 ♖g4+ 48. ♖h3 ♖e4! 49. ♖g3 ♖g4+ 50. ♖f2 ♖f4 51. ♖e3 ♖e4+ 52. ♖d3 ♖f4 and draws.

46... ♖xd4 47. ♖xd4 ♖f6 48. ♖e3

g5 49. h5 ♖e5 50. ♖f3+ ♖f6
51. ♖d4 ♖e5 ½-½

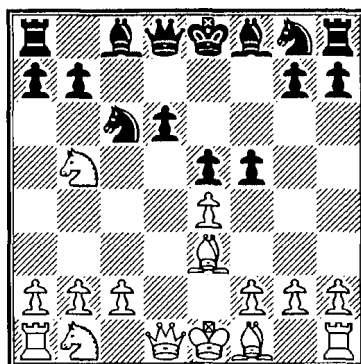
This game demonstrates the flaws in Morphy's chess training – his weak understanding of the problems of pawn structure and the principles of play connected with static positions. Conversely, we can also see his notable toughness and mastery in the defense of difficult positions.

The following short, spectacular game has been convincingly annotated by Kasparov in *Garry Kasparov On My Great Predecessors: Part I*, on pages 40-42, and I will allow myself to make use of his commentary.

Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (9) December 27, 1858

1. e4 c5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. d4 c×d4
4. ♖×d4 e6 5. ♖b5 d6 6. ♖f4 e5
7. ♖e3 f5?



This is Black's first mistake and it happens to be fatal, which is what sometimes happens in sharp opening variations. 7... ♖f6 was correct.

8. ♖1c3!

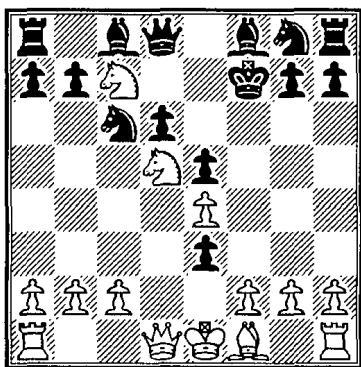
Morphy was colossally strong in positions where a dynamic solution was

necessary. His natural feel for the laws of chess dynamics was boundless.

8...f4

After 8...a6 White achieves a winning position with 9.♖d5! a×b5 10.♙b6 ♗h4 11.♖c7+ ♖d7 12.♖×a8 ♗×e4+ 13.♗e2 – Kasparov. Nor does 8...♖f6 9.♙g5 ♗e6 (9...a6 10.♙×f6 g×f6 11.♗h5+ +-) 10.♙×f6 g×f6 11.♖d5 ♙×d5 12.e×d5 ♖e7 13.♗h5+ look any better for Black. White has a decisive advantage.

9.♘d5! f×e3 10.♘bc7+ ♔f7



11. ♔f3+?!

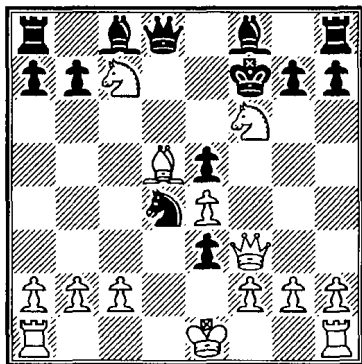
Morphy's choice was objectively weaker than 11.♖xg8 with the likely continuation 11...exf2+ 12.♗xf2 ♖h4+ 13.g3 ♗xe4 14.♙g2 ♗f5+ 15.♗e1 ♖f6 16.♗f1 and a great advantage to White.

11...♗f6 12.♕c4 ♗d4! 13.♗xf6+ d5!

Dour defensive play was not Anderssen's forte, but he was a great master of the active defense. He did not retreat his king to g6 because after 14. ♖h5+ ♔xf6 White would be sure to find something decisive. Kasparov suggests that would be 15. ♖e8+; but White

appears to win even more simply after 15.f4 ♖e6 16.fxe5 ♜e7 17.♗xe6 ♗xe6 18.0-0-0 with an inevitable catastrophe: 18...♜e8 19.exd6+ ♜d8 20.♖a5+ b6 21.♖d5 ♗b8 22.♗b5 ♖g6 23.♖c6.

14. ♖×d5+



14...♔g6?

It is easy in sharp positions to cross the line separating win from loss or loss from draw. So it was in this case. Analysis shows that 14...♙xd5 was better. After 15.♟fxd5+ ♞xf3+ 16.gxf3 exf2+ 17.♙xf2 ♖b8 18.♖hd1 b5 19.b4 White would have a material and positional advantage. But 14...♞e7! the strongest move, discovered by Zukertort, could very well have embarrassed Morphy – if Black had found the strongest continuation thereafter: 15.♞h5 gxf6! 16.♞f7+ ♜d6 17.♞xa8 ♞xc2+ 18.♞e2 ♞xa1 19.♖xa1 ♞e7! 20.♞h5 ♞g7! 21.♞f1 ♞g4! 22.♞xg4 ♜xg4 23.f3 ♜d7 24.♖d1 ♜h6 with a very small advantage to White, and the most likely outcome of this very sharp “crossfire” being a draw. So, as you can see, Black’s task would not have been easy, not for a moment. And as it happened, the game now ended very quickly.

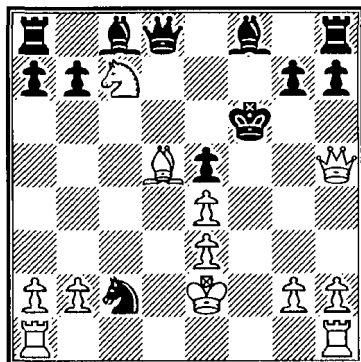
15.♔h5+ ♚xf6 16.fxe3!

Not 16. ♖e8+? ♜×e8.

16... ♖×c2+

Or 16... ♜×c7 17. ♖f1+ ♖f5 18. ♖×f5+ ♖×f5 19. ♜×f5+ ♜e7 20. ♜e6+ ♜d8 21. 0-0-0! ♖d6 22. ♖×d7 and wins – Kasparov; 16... g6 17. ♜h4+! g5 18. ♜f2+.

17. ♜e2



And in this picturesque position, Black resigned. 1-0

Anderssen's defeat as a result of the absolute non-development of his pieces is all the more astonishing when you recall, for example, the celebrated "Immortal Game" Anderssen - Kieseritzky, London, 1851.

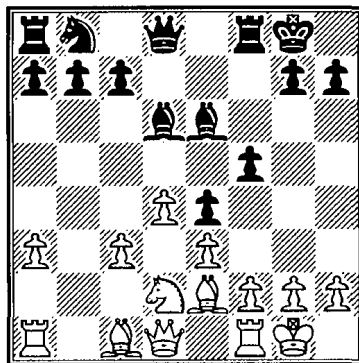
After the following game, Garry Kasparov, in his *Garry Kasparov on My Great Predecessors: Part I*, writes on page 42 that Anderssen quipped: "Morphy wins in 17 moves, whereas it takes me 77. However, this is still bearable..."

Anderssen, A. - Morphy, P.

Match, Paris (10) December 27, 1858

1.a3 e5 2.c4 ♖f6 3. ♖c3 d5 4.c×d5 ♖×d5 5.e3 ♖e6 6. ♖f3 ♖d6

7. ♖e2 0-0 8. 0-0 ♖×c3 9.b×c3 f5 10.d4 e4 11. ♖d2



11... ♖f6

Morphy sends his heavy pieces to the kingside, leaving the center to his opponent. He also played like this in the 5th game of his match with Harrwitz and was outplayed.

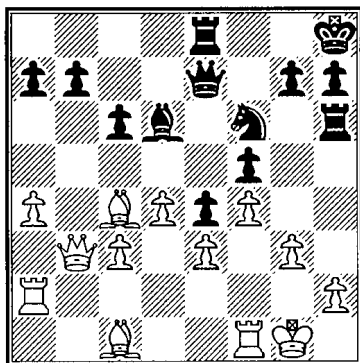
12.f4 ♖h6 13.g3 ♖d7 14. ♖c4?!

Anderssen finally realizes that it might be useful to keep the light-squared bishop! Although, his execution proves faulty; it was very important to insert 14. ♖b1! first, and only after 14...b6 (14... ♖b6 15.c4) 15. ♖c4.

14... ♖×c4?

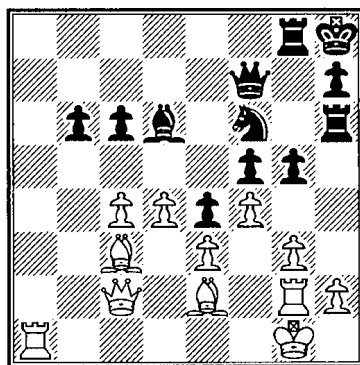
Instead of exploiting White's inaccuracy with 14... ♖b6 15. ♖e5 c5 with an excellent game, Morphy responds with a huge (in this context) positional error. He grants his opponent the advantage of the two bishops, which is very significant in a position that must soon be opened. Meanwhile, he deprives himself of a useful piece for attacking White's weakened light squares. A similar error was committed by Harrwitz in the 6th game of their match.

15. ♖xc4+ ♜h8 16. ♞a2! ♜e7
17. a4 ♜f6 18. ♜b3 c6 19. ♖e6?!
♞e8 20. ♖c4



White's position is quite strong, despite his two wasted tempi, because nothing vital has been changed. In this position, static factors completely dominate the dynamic and in such situations Morphy was prone to uncertain play.

20... ♜g4 21. ♞g2 ♞b8 22. ♖e2
♜f6 23. c4 b6 24. ♖b2 ♜f7
25. ♜c2 ♖e7 26. ♖c3 ♞g8 27. a5
♖d6 28. axb6 axb6 29. ♞a1! g5



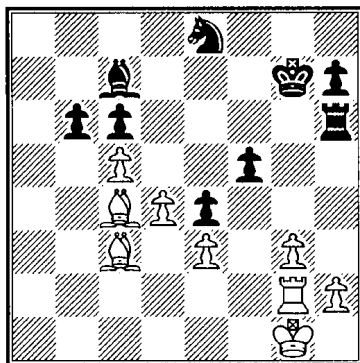
The drawbacks of this move are obvious; yet without it Black would be purely passive, which certainly was not Morphy's style.

30. f×g5 ♞×g5 31. ♞a8+ ♞g8
32. ♜a4 ♞×a8 33. ♜×a8+ ♜e8

34. ♜×e8+ ♜×e8 35. c5 ♖c7
36. ♖c4

The resulting endgame is very difficult for Black. Had White continued 36. d5+ ♜g8 37. d6 ♖d8 38. ♖c4+ ♜f8 39. ♞f2 he would have obtained an easily won position.

36... ♜g7



37. c×b6?

White's slight inaccuracy on the previous move leads to a much more serious slip here. 37. ♞a2! bxc5 38. dxc5+ ♜g6 39. ♞a8 was much better, with a decisive advantage for White. Now the game drags on and Morphy, having gotten into a difficult situation, defends doggedly and resourcefully.

37... ♖×b6 38. ♞b2 ♖c7 39. ♞b7
♜f6 40. ♖b4 ♞g6 41. ♖f8 h5
42. ♜f2 h4 43. g×h4 ♞g4 44. h5
♞h4 46. h6 ♞×h2+ 46. ♜g1 ♞h3
47. ♖f1 ♞g3+ 48. ♜f2 ♞g4 49. ♖c4
♞h4 50. ♖g8 ♖d6 51. ♖×d6 ♜×d6
52. ♞d7 ♜e8!

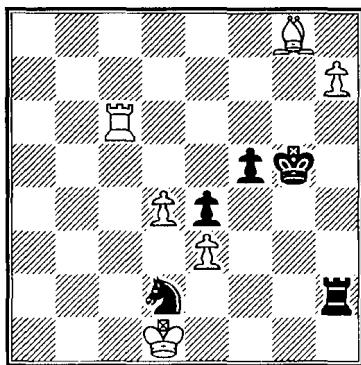
An excellent resource as well as a subtle trap!

53. h7!

Anderssen avoids the pitfall, after

53.♙f7? ♖xh6 54.♙xe8 ♖h8 it's a draw.

53...♖g5 54.♖e7 ♜d6 55.♖e6 ♜c4 56.♖xc6 ♜d2 57.♖e2 ♖h2+ 58.♖d1



58...♙f3

Black's extremely dogged resistance has allowed him to activate his pieces; but it would appear that Morphy lost significant saving chances by not playing 58...f4. Understandably, he did not wish to let the white king escape from the first rank, but in such sharp situations concrete variations always outweigh generalizations.

Morphy didn't always make full use of his brilliant calculating abilities and all too often relied on his powerful intuition and his deep understanding of the games innermost secrets, because he could easily outplay any opponent and did not need to tap any additional resources. Just like Capablanca!

After 58...f4 the most likely continuation would have been: 59.exf4+ ♖xf4 60.♖c2 ♙f3+ 61.♖c3 ♙g5 62.♖c7 e3 63.♖e7 ♙e4+ 64.♖d3 ♖d2+ 65.♖c4 ♖h2 66.♖f7+ ♖g3 67.♖g7+ ♖f2 68.♖f7+ ♖g3 69.♖e7 ♖f4 when I don't see any clear way to strengthen White's

position. If this is so, then Black's 58th move must be recognized as the losing move, because I no longer see a way for Black to save himself.

59.♖c7 ♖g6

Now it's too late for 59...f4 60.♖g7+ ♖f6 61.♖f7+ and wins.

60.d5 f4 61.exf4 e3 62.♖e7 e2+

62...♖h1+ 63.♖c2 ♜d4+ 64.♖d3 ♙f5 65.♖xe3 loses similarly.

63.♖xe2 ♖h1+ 64.♖c2 ♜d4+ 65.♖d2 ♙xe2 66.♖xe2 ♖g7 67.♖e3 ♖e1+ 68.♖d4 ♖f1 69.♖e5 ♖e1+ 70.♖f5 ♖d1 71.♙e6 ♖d4 72.♖e5 ♖d1 73.f5 ♖h1 74.f6+ ♖xh7 75.♖d6 ♖a1 76.♖e7 ♖a7+ 77.♙d7 1-0

A hard game for both players; Anderssen showed great determination and will to win. The following game, alas, would be a disappointment to him.

Morphy, P. - Anderssen, A.

Match, Paris (11) December 28, 1858

1.e4 e6 2.d4 g6?!

Anderssen seeks to keep the game closed. Such tactics worked sufficiently well for Barnes and Boden, but Morphy could be a fast learner when it was necessary!

3.♙d3 ♙g7 4.♙e3 c5 5.c3 cxd4 6.cxd4 ♜c6 7.♙e2

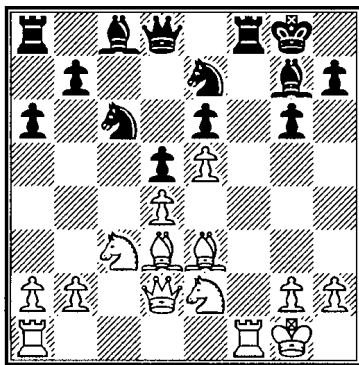
Morphy does not block the possible advance of the f-pawn in order to support the e5-pawn if Black tries to at-

tack it. Many of his games are apt illustrations of his high regard for the element of the space advantage.

7...♖ge7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♖bc3 d5

The side with less space rarely finds it profitable to fix the pawn structure. Therefore, 9...b6 looks preferable.

10.e5 f6 11.f4 f×e5 12.f×e5 a6 13.♖d2



13...♖b4?!

Anderssen again neglects development and moreover knights are frequently superior to bishops in blocked positions. Hence, 13...♖d7 was better.

14.♖g5 ♖×d3 15.♖×d3 ♖d7 16.♖h3 ♖e8 17.♖g3 ♖c8 18.♖×f8+ ♖×f8 19.♖f1 ♖e8 20.♖h4 ♖f5?

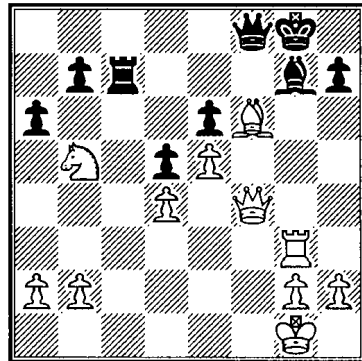
Black had to hold on to his last knight; after 20...♖c6 he would have counterplay, although White would still be better. Now the play is one-sided.

21.♖×f5 g×f5 22.♖f3 ♖b5 23.♖g3 ♖c7 24.♖f6 f4

Anderssen really had no choice but to sacrifice the pawn because all the “normal” lines lose by force: 24...♖h8

25.♖h6! ♖f8 26.♖×g7 ♖×g7 27.♖×b5 a×b5 28.h3! b6 29.♖f2! ♖f7 30.♖f3! ♖g6 31.♖×g7+ ♖×g7 32.♖×e6.

25.♖×f4 ♖f8 26.♖×b5



White also wins easily after 26.♖h6 ♖d3 27.♖×g7+ ♖×g7 28.♖×g7+ (the sideline 28.♖×g7?? ♖f1# is the point of 24...f4) 28...♖×g7 29.♖×g7 ♖×g7 although the text is simpler.

26...a×b5 27.♖h6 ♖h8 28.♖×g7 ♖×g7 29.♖f2 ♖g8 30.♖×g7+ ♖×g7 31.♖×g7 ♖×g7 32.g4 b4 33.h4 b5 34.♖e3 b3 35.a3 1-0

This game gave Morphy the seven victories necessary to win the match; thus, this historic encounter concluded.

The following day they played six off-hand games, which by agreement all featured the King’s Gambit. These games confirmed Anderssen’s opinion that playing open games against Morphy was unrewarding; the mini-match ended 5-1 in Morphy’s favor and there ended the meeting of these two chess giants; they would never see each other again. The forty-year-old Anderssen would play chess successfully for another twenty years, against all the best players of his time, while Morphy, who was nineteen years

younger, would very soon leave serious chess forever!

Anderssen's chivalrous behavior towards Morphy, who confidently wrested from him the title of best chessplayer in the world, was supremely noble and almost unbelievable by today's standards. Gifted players are very rarely distinguished by their light and easygoing character and that's putting it mildly; when battling for lofty titles and their place in the annals of chess one should not hold one's breath, generally speaking, waiting for courteous behavior towards their opponents.

Chess is first and foremost a struggle aimed at crushing the opponent's ego, and chessplayers, understandably, need to have the corresponding type of character. This is especially evident today; but even in more "gentlemanly" times all sorts of things were possible. One need only remember Staunton's behavior when he refused to meet Morphy in a match while still trying, for chess society at large, to "put a good face on bad play."

I present some quotes from Anderssen as evidence of his gallantry. The first two are from H.C. Schönberg's, *Die Großmeister des Schachs* p.87-88:

"I consider Mr. Morphy the finest chess player who ever existed. He is far superior to any now living, and would doubtless have beaten Labourdonnais himself. In all his games with me, he has not only played, in every instance, the exact move, but the most exact. He never makes a mistake, but, if his adversary commits the slightest error, he is lost."

"I cannot describe better the impression that Morphy made on me than by saying that he treats chess with the earnestness and conscientiousness of an artist."

Any man who can praise his conqueror in such terms deserves the highest respect! But one of Anderssen's expressions deserves particular attention: "Morphy's Spiel wirkt auf mich wie aus einer anderen Welt," (Opfermann, H.C. *Die Spielgeheimnisse der großen Schachkämpfer* p.50). This can be translated as "Morphy's play seemed to me like something from another world." This seemingly simple phrase contains a deep concept.

Anderssen was speaking of a *qualitative* difference between Morphy's play and all that existed in chess before him. Anderssen was able to recognize *the principal difference between a notable talent, even so great a talent as he himself possessed, and genius* such as was granted to Paul Morphy. Anderssen came, he saw; and he bowed before it! Such innate perception is possessed by precious few and one must also have an abundance of maturity and nobility to speak it aloud! For this, Anderssen deserves our deepest respect.

My analysis of Paul Morphy's games is now complete. We have examined almost every aspect of his serious chess career and I don't see any point in studying his later games *for the purposes of our research*. I think you will agree with me that chess lost a great deal because of the voluntary retirement of one of the greatest geniuses of all time. All that remains is to organize our observations and draw our conclusions.

Conclusion

Summarizing what we've seen, it seems vitally necessary to mention that there is no mystery to Morphy's success. The factors that lead to his spectacular rise to the top and what made him so indisputably better than his contemporaries can all be found in this book! His innate gifts were colossal: a phenomenal memory, his staggering intellectual aptitude, and an enormous specific talent for chess.

A significant factor in Morphy's fate was the combination of circumstances that brought together his native gifts with a family that contained an unusually strong chess environment, thanks mainly to his uncle Ernest; along with the financial resources to purchase books and subscribe to chess magazines, particularly European ones. Consequently, he had the opportunity of immersing himself in chess at that precise age when the ability to absorb information was at its peak.

However, there also existed one serious obstacle, and that was the middling level of his opposition, not just in Paul's immediate social circle, but also within the American chess community. The greater part of Morphy's games played in America were odds games! Players of even a halfway decent European standard simply didn't exist and there was certainly no such a thing as a professional chess trainer.

Today, the following conditions are unquestionably necessary for the successful development of even the most gifted chess talent:

- a) Considerable natural talent
- b) A sufficiently early start
- c) A good teacher, preferably one who is highly qualified
- d) A strong *chess atmosphere* that allows the young player to develop

We have noted the numerous shortcomings of Morphy's "chess education," such as his limited and rather outdated opening repertoire and his problems playing Black against closed openings. Morphy's lagging grasp of strategic problems had to do with particular pawn structures. As White, he only played 1.e4 and in reply to 1...e5, he limited himself to the King's Gambit or Evans' Gambit. This seriously impoverished his play and denied him the chance to play more varied positions, although it was enough for him to win at the time.

Yet, there would soon appear a new, considerably stronger generation of players headed by Steinitz, Louis Paulsen, Zukertort, and Blackburne who would have compelled Morphy, had he continued his chess career, into confronting new chess battlefields with much wider horizons, and we can immediately see the difficulties that would have awaited him.

Had this situation arose then Morphy's narrow arsenal of strategic tools would

have highlighted his lack of a strong *chess atmosphere*, which is necessary for the successful development of young talent. Although he very quickly broadened his chess horizons by playing against the best European masters, this is still a process that is much more effective when it occurs at a younger age.

In a famous series of articles published between January and April of 1885 in *The International Chess Magazine*, Steinitz took exception to the claim that Morphy's "play was more free of errors than that of any other master before or after him." He pinpointed some of the errors committed by Morphy, many of which occurred in positions where static factors predominated over the dynamic, just as we have seen in this book. It's been said that it was precisely this analysis of Morphy's games that enabled Steinitz to discover the principles of positional play, *the greater part of which consists of the static factors in chess*.

And while I believe that Steinitz underestimated the importance of the dynamic in chess and Morphy's fantastic strength in this aspect of the game, he still stated his opinion that "Morphy was stronger than anyone he played with, including Anderssen and Paulsen." And that had Morphy continued playing "he would of necessity cultivate and extend the system which has been developed since his time" and "would probably have been the first to make improvements or to perceive and acknowledge them in the practice of others."

From all that has been said, I will conclude that *before he went to Europe, Morphy's chess education was insufficient. He was a runt, with the gifts of a genius. And that even after his match with Anderssen he was still a very young, phenomenally gifted, actively learning player, who still had to enlarge his opening and strategic repertoire. He also had definite shortcomings in the area of chess technique.*

So, what were the factors that allowed Morphy to achieve such amazing successes? What was the basis of his fantastic chess strength? He had an outstanding combinative eye and could calculate variations better than any of his opponents, and he also had good endgame technique for his time, even though he had insufficient experience playing endgames. All this was enough to run roughshod over all his contemporaries.

Yet, other players also enjoyed similar qualities, such as Johannes Zukertort who outstripped Morphy in the variety of his opening repertoire and his strategic technique. Nevertheless, by the standards of chess history, he is less esteemed than Morphy.

So what else was there that made Morphy a phenomenon? It appears to me – and I hope I have made it convincingly clear to the readers of this book – that his unique qualities were Morphy's *immense intuition* and *his innate feel for the dynamic requirements of a chess game*. Morphy's intuition allowed him to grasp the essence of certain factors *with his entire being*.

From the opening lines of this book, I have emphasized the outstanding feeling

Paul Morphy had for *the initiative, piece development, and the factor of the interaction of the pieces*. This last factor is the most important element of the dynamic component of chess. This factor is all-encompassing and includes, to a somewhat lesser extent, the static component of chess as well. But it shows itself much more boldly, effectively, and clearly in the dynamic. All other principles of chess, without exception, incorporate this element.

Beyond any doubt, prior to Morphy no one ever expressed so clearly or so convincingly the power and importance of the dynamic elements of the game of chess. Morphy's best games remain unsurpassed in simplicity and stand as convincing examples of "dynamic chess." It wasn't until Capablanca appeared that someone showed such a harmonic understanding of the coordination of the pieces at his level. And it wasn't until Alekhine emerged that someone showed the power and importance of the dynamic component of chess to the extent that Morphy did.

There is one more quality of Morphy's chess profile that I would like to discern, because players with a dynamic style, such as Alekhine, Tal, and Kasparov, tend toward strategically complex positions, even when other choices are available. Yet, Morphy's play showed a rare combination of simple directness and a dynamic approach. Therefore, Paul Morphy can be considered *the founder of the contemporary dynamic approach to chess*.

If Morphy's play was revolutionary for its time, why were his contemporaries and those that immediately followed unable to recognize this and incorporate his methods? After all, they assimilated Steinitz's theory, which was also of a rather revolutionary character. The reason, I insist, is that *it was harder for Morphy's contemporaries to grasp the innovations that his play brought to chess than to understand the principles expounded by Steinitz*.

Steinitz collected and systematized principles that were already familiar to the best chessplayers; the main points of his theory relied on obtaining *long-lasting advantages and only then looking for an attack or combination*. These positional precepts were somewhat obvious and could readily be grasped, *while Morphy relied on temporary advantages* that were harder to comprehend. Furthermore, one very often had to calculate variations to fully understand such advantages, which is usually a far more unpleasant task than simply making comparisons based on well-known principles.

I hope that I have fulfilled my mission of presenting the distinctiveness and "enigma" of the chessplayer that was Paul Morphy, and of showing the extent of that greatness which allowed the fifth World Champion, Max Euwe, to speak thus of our hero in a 1937 interview in the Soviet chess publication 64 :

"Morphy is commonly called the greatest chess genius of all time... If the distinguishing characteristic of genius is that it goes far ahead of the rest of its epoch, then Morphy was a chess genius in the most complete sense of the term."

Table of Results

This is not intended as a complete record of all games Morphy played, but it does include all his known results in serious

play, the more significant of his "unofficial" results, and some of his more striking results when giving odds.

Formal Tournament and Match Games

First American Chess Congress, New York, 6 October – 10 November, 1857

	1	2	3	total
Morphy	1	1	1	3
J. Thompson	0	0	0	0

	1	2	3	total
Morphy	1	1	1	3
A.B. Meek	0	0	0	0

	1	2	3	4	total
Morphy	1	1	½	1	3½
T. Lichtenhein	0	0	½	0	½

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	total
Morphy	1	½	0	½	1	1	1	1	6
L. Paulsen	0	½	1	½	0	0	0	0	2

Match, New York, 28-30 November 1857 (Morphy giving pawn and move) ²

Morphy	+4 -0 =1
C.H. Stanley	

Match, London, 19 July – 22 August 1858 ²

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	total
Morphy	½	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	½	1	10
Löwenthal	½	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	½	1	4

Match, London, August 1858 (Morphy giving pawn and move) ²

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	total
Morphy	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	6
J. Owen	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	1

Match, London, September 1858

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	total
Morphy	0	0	1	1	1	1	½	1	5½
D. Harrwitz	½	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2½

Match, Paris, 20-28 December 1858 ²

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	total
Morphy	0	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	0	1	8
A. Anderssen	1	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	0	3

Match, Paris, February-March 1859 ²

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	total
Morphy	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7½
A. Mongredien	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½

Match, London, April 1859 (Morphy giving queen knight) ¹

Morphy	+7 -2 =0
T.H. Worrall	

Match, New York, May 1859 (Morphy giving queen knight) ¹

Morphy	+5 -0 =1
F. Perrin	

Match, New York, May 1859 (Morphy giving queen knight) ¹

Morphy	+5 -3 =1
Thompson	

Match, New York, July 1859 (Morphy giving queen knight) ¹

Morphy	+6 -4 =1
Lichtenhein	

Informal Series and Offhand Games

New Orleans, May 1850 ¹

Morphy +3 -0
J.J. Löwenthal

New York, October-December 1857 ¹

Morphy +8 -2 =0 (giving pawn and three moves)
T.J. Bryan

Morphy +30 -18 =7 (giving queen knight)
T.J. Bryan

Morphy 3-0
D.W. Fiske

Morphy +7 -1 =0
G. Hammond

Morphy +10 -3 =3 (giving queen knight)
D. Julien

Morphy 3-0
Marache

Morphy +3 -0 =2 (giving pawn and move)
Marache

Morphy 9-0 (giving queen rook)
A. Perrin

Morphy +1 -0 =2
F. Perrin

Morphy +8 -2 =0 (giving pawn and two moves)
F. Perrin

Morphy +17 -9 =3 (giving queen knight)
F. Perrin

Morphy +7 -1 =1 (giving queen knight)
A. Reif

Morphy +3 -1 =0 (giving pawn and two)
H. Richardson

Morphy	+12 -1 =0
Stanley	(these were even-strength games, separate from the odds match)

Morphy	+23 -1 =0
Schulten	

London, 1858-59 ³

Morphy	+19 -7 =0
Barnes	

Morphy	+10 -1 =1
Bird	

Morphy	+5 -1 =3
Boden	

Morphy	+2 -0 =0
Hampton	

Morphy	+2 -0 =0
Kipping	

Morphy	+6 -0 =0
Lowe	

Morphy	+3 -0 =0
Medley	

Morphy	+2 -0 =0
Mongredien	

Morphy	+4 -1 =0
Owen	

Paris, 1858-59 ³

Morphy	+5 -1 =0
Anderssen	

Morphy	+2 -0 =0
Bancker	

Morphy	+7 -0 =0
Budzinsky	

Morphy Harrwitz	+0 -1 =0	
Morphy Journod	+12 -0 =0	
Morphy Laroche	+5 -0 =2	
Morphy Rivière	+6 -1 =1	
Morphy Budzinsky	+5 -1 =1	(giving pawn and move)
Morphy Devinck	+2 -0 =2	(giving pawn and move)
Morphy Laroche	+3 -0 =3	(giving pawn and move)
Morphy Delaunnay	+4 -0 =0	(giving pawn and two)
Morphy Lecrivain	+5 -2 =0	(giving pawn and two)
Morphy Lequesne	+3 -0 =1	(giving pawn and two)

Havana, October 1862 ²

Morphy F. Sicre	1-0	
Morphy J. Sicre	1-0	(playing blindfolded)
Morphy Medina	1-0	(giving queen knight)

Sources for results table:

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² Shibut, Macon, *Paul Morphy and the Evolution of Chess Theory*, Caissa Editions, Yorklyn, Delaware, 1993

³ Edge, Frederick, *The Exploits and Triumphs in Europe of Paul Morphy*, D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1859

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